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Oxberry - The New English Drama - 1824



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THE
NEW ENGLISH DRAMA,

WITH

PREFATORY REMARKS,

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES, AND NOTES,

Critical and Explanatory ;

BEING THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING WHICH IS FAITHFULLY MARKED

WITH THE

STAGE BUSINESS, AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

As Performed

At the Theatres Royal.

· BY W. OXBERRY, COMEDIAN.

VOLUME NINETEENTH.

CONTAINING

RICH AND POOR.—HENRY THE EIGHTH.

WINTER'S TALE.—WOOD DEMON.—KENILWORTH.

London.

PUBLISHED FOR THE PROPRIETORS, BY W. SIMPKIN AND
R. MARSHALL, STATIONERS' COURT, LUDGATE STREET,
AND C. CHAPPLE, 59, PALL MALL.

1824.

Oxberry's Edition.

TAMERLANE.

A TRAGEDY,

By Nicholas Rowe.

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING WHICH IS FAITHFULLY MARKED
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Harace W. O'Connor

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Remarks.

TAMERLANE.

About the commencement of the last century, there arose in this country a new school of tragic composition, corresponding in many points with that of a neighbouring nation, and dramas modelled according to its formal precepts monopolised possession of the stage till within the recollection of the present generation; the wild heroics of Lee and Dryden had just given place to the more simple style of writing cultivated by Otway and Southerne, and the English theatre appeared to be on the point of again shining with resplendent glory, when the fatal influence of a few great names blighted all its buds of promise, and doomed it to endure a long cheerless night of monotonous dulness. Congreve, Rowe, and Addison set the fashion, by producing tragedies, which, though constructed upon false principles, and essentially undramatic, undoubtedly displayed superlative beauties of sentiment and language, and for eighty or a hundred years after, a tedious tribe of versifiers, aping with feeble servility their illustrious predecessors, inundated the stage with numberless mawkish pieces, in which declamation was substituted for passion, and description occupied the place of incident. We suppose we need hardly stay to enumerate writers whose names must be familiar to most of our readers, though the dramas they composed, after having enjoyed their brief season of notoriety, are now as completely unknown to people in general as if they never had existed. From the days of Aaron Hill, Hughes, and Phillips, down to those of Murphy, Hoole, and Hayley, the last lumbering disciples of the school, scarcely six tragedies were produced which deserve to be mentioned with commendation, though the list of authors includes men of such celebrity as Young and Johnson.

The play before us is a perfect specimen of the class we have been describing; the language for the most part is coldly correct, the action moves tediously on, the incidents are few, and the interest is feeble; as for the characters, they are either extravagant libels upon humanity,

out of keeping and out of nature, or so totally common-place and insipid as to excite no feeling of any kind but indifference. *Tamerlane* and *Bajazet* are the two opposing powers of good and evil, the angels of light and darkness, the one all gall and vinegar, the other all milk and honey; but, as we have observed on a previous occasion, these vulgar displays of mere unmixed characters upon the stage—monsters redeemed by no single virtue, and saints deformed by no one vice, betray either a sad want of taste or a lamentable lack of ability in a dramatist; the veriest scribbler that ever blotted paper will find it no difficult task to describe an angel and a devil upon the plan here adopted, and play them off in opposition to each other, through five tedious acts, very decorously; but such a system we conceive is altogether from the purpose of playing. Personages of this description are perhaps never met with in the world, or even if they are, are not proper subjects to be introduced upon the stage, whose end was and is—or should be—to exhibit “the web of life of a mingled yarn, good and ill together,” and to paint men and women as they really exist, neither raised altogether above humanity nor sunk irrecoverably below it. Vice without one redeeming quality, and virtue assailable by no temptation, are alike ineffective in the theatre: the one is beneath our attention, and the other beyond our solicitude.

That the characters of *Tamerlane* and *Bajazet* come nearly within this description, and consequently are liable to these objections, must we think be granted. Rowe, who had taste enough to admire a better style of writing, yet wanted courage or ability to imitate it, was doubtless sensible of the defects of his plan; but dramatic propriety and historical accuracy appear to have been but secondary considerations with him while composing this tragedy, and he therefore hesitated not to render them subservient to other more important objects which he had in view; with these, however, we have no concern; our business is to examine the piece as we find it, without reference to the adventitious circumstances which influenced the author in the construction of it. Rowe aimed at painting a benignant monarch and a ferocious tyrant, but it strikes us that he has neither rendered *Tamerlane* so attractive, nor *Bajazet* so odious, as he evidently intended; the boasted virtue of the former is little more than “a rhapsody of words;” and all our respect for his philosophical magnanimity cannot conceal from us the ungracious fact, that this model for sovereigns

is no better at bottom than a pedantic, egotistical sermonizer, brimful of conceit and mock humility. *Bajazet*, with all his brutality, is far the more interesting personage of the two, for though a ferocious animal, he is no hypocrite, and even his ungovernable passions, malignant and inappeasable as they are, are preferable to the dull stagnant pool of his rival's mind. One kindly feeling too remains in his wildest paroxysms, to connect him with human nature: his love for his daughter half atones for his hatred of others, and insensibly wins for him a portion of that esteem which we are compelled to withhold from the frigid propriety of *Tamerlane*. In other respects, Rowe, we admit, has made his monster monstrous enough; the Saracen's Head upon Snow Hill, or a bull inflamed to madness by goads, dogs, and brands, would be but a faint emblem of this distorted dæmon: Billingsgate itself never poured forth a torrent of abuse half so eloquent as that with which he favours *Tamerlane* in Acts 2 and 4.—The sorrows of the ravished heroine and her whining lover excite but little sympathy, for though they are on the rack throughout the play, they are not made remarkably amiable, nor are their misfortunes very affectingly described. *Moneses* seems to be "a wretch created to repine," and his unvarying depression throws a corresponding damp on the spirits of the audience; he is, however, as self-confident, opiated a gentleman as one would wish to meet with, for no fanatical puritan ever quitted the world with a more presumptuous reliance upon the pureness of his past life, or the efficacy of an empty faith: on the point of being strangled, he exclaims to *Arpasia*, who gives him the comfortable assurance that "very shortly they shall both be happy"—

" There is no room for doubt; 'tis certain bliss;
The tyrant's cruel violence, thy loss,
Already seem more light; *nor has my soul*
One unrepented guilt upon remembrance,
To make me dread the justice of hereafter;
But, standing now on the last verge of life,
Boldly I view the vast abyss, Eternity,
Eager to plunge, and leave my woes behind me."

This strangulation is a vile incident in a play, even when supposed to take place behind the scenes; Johnson hazarded it in his "Irene" upon the open stage, till the shrieks of the female spectators and the

execrations of the men compelled the actors to desist, and we must confess we never witnessed the last act of "Tamerlane" but with unutterable disgust; the very idea of such a procedure causes horror instead of pity. Rowe has not managed his heroine's fall very cleverly; had the agony of the moment burst her heart-strings, and instantaneous death ensued, the incident would have been far more natural, effective, and decorous than the volley of oaths and curses which she now contrives to give vent to ere she falls. The lady's destiny is certainly very melancholy, but her lachrymose bewailings of it are excessively tedious, and she has moreover a vile spice of prudery in her composition, which she clearly betrays when she beseeches *Tamerlane* to spare *Bajaset's* life, not from any feeling of compassion for the man, or any sentiment of duty towards her husband, but simply from an apprehension that his execution may be injurious to her reputation, and furnish matter for "the busy world's scurril mirth."

Although the language of the piece in general is monotonous and undramatic, 'twould be unjust to deny that it contains some splendid descriptive passages, and many felicities of thought and expression; but what are cadences however harmonious, imagery however elegant, or descriptions however glowing, when stirring incident and an exciting plot are absent? The polished periods of the speakers by degrees fall unheeded upon the listless ear, and the mind sighs for something to rouse it from the state of inaction into which it finds itself lulled. Read the speech with which the play opens—a fair specimen of the rest—and say whether such measured, unimpassioned declamation has any thing about it to awake the attention or interest the feelings of an audience; throughout the piece, the dialogue proceeds in the same formal, sing-song style; all the personages alike, without discrimination of character or rank, deal in high-flown metaphor and flowery phraseology; each man seems determined to have his fair quota of talk, "turn and turn about," and when one speaker has delivered six lines, the next is sure to have half-a-dozen in reply. It is amusing also to observe the sedulous anxiety with which broken lines are in general avoided; when any one fails to conclude a speech with the requisite number of syllables, the hemistich is in most instances as carefully completed by the respondent as if the slightest approach to a colloquial style were the worst fault a dramatist can be guilty of. The defects of the plot we have already adverted to; the

grand question, the fate of *Bejaset* is decided at the outset, and all that follows is of secondary interest; the mind, after contemplating the subversion of an empire, is bewildered with a succession of petty details, a paltry conspiracy, and two insipid love-plots, to which *Tamertane* seems half inclined to add a third. Heavily too as the main action labours on, it stands completely still in the middle of the play, while the useless episode of the *Dervise* is introduced to afford *Tamertane* an opportunity of indulging in a controversy upon modes of faith, which would be perfectly in place in an argument upon religious toleration at a debating-club, but might very well have been spared in a tragedy. The authors of the "*Dramatic Censor*," 1770, say, "We are bold to assert that no pulpit ever advanced more useful instruction than this scene affords," and we readily assent to the correctness of their opinion, though far from thinking it particularly complimentary to Rowe's dramatic talent, whatever honour it may do him as a moralist. At length the play is helped on to a conclusion by the old expedient, a conspiracy, the clumsiest both in contrivance and execution that can be met with in any drama but "*Cato*;" and *Bejaset* finally stalks off in triumphant defiance, while the innocent suffer, for *Moneses* and *Arpasia* appear to have been guilty of no fault beyond a little venial artifice.

But, even were the plot the cleverest ever contrived, and the characters as engaging as they are repulsive, 'twould avail but little, while the interest remained clogged with the multitude of words, the ill-timed, unnatural displays of eloquence, which Rowe had such a passion for introducing. Refer, for instance, to the most striking situation in the whole piece, the moment of *Arpasia's* death, and say what can be better calculated to quench every spark of feeling it may have awakened, than the introduction at such a time of a laboured piece of description like the following. *Haly* has merely to announce that *Arpasia* has expired, yet he can by no means manage to convey the information in less compass than eight lines:—

" Already she's beyond the power of art ;
For, see, a deadly cold has froze the blood,
The pliant limbs grow stiff, and lose their use,
And all the animating fire is quench'd.
E'en beauty too is dead ; an ashy pale

Grows o'er the roses, the red lips have lost
 Their fragrant hue, for want of that sweet breath
 That blest 'em with its odours as it past."

The distracting moment of parting for ever from him to whom she is devotedly attached, might be expected to draw from a woman some little display of feeling, and some faint burst of passion ; but, how does *Arpasia* comport herself in this trying situation ?—she gives vent to her anguish in the following truly natural and affecting style :—

" Fain would I still detain thee, hold thee still ;
 Nor honour can forbid, that we together
 Should share the poor few minutes that remain.
 I swear, methinks this sad society
 Has somewhat pleasing in it.—Death's dark shades
 Seem, as we journey on, to lose their horror.
 At near approach, the monsters, form'd by fear,
 Are vanish'd all, and leave the prospect clear ;
 Amidst the gloomy vale, a pleasing scene,
 With flow'rs adorn'd, and never-fading green,
 Inviting stands, to take the wretched in :
 No wars, no wrongs, no tyrants, no despair,
 Disturb the quiet of a place so fair,
 But injur'd lovers find Elysium there."

Now we call upon every unprejudiced reader to say whether there is any thing in these common-place triplets, these passionless, inanimate sentiments, to arouse the slightest feeling of sympathy for the distressed lady who utters them ; si vis me flere, &c., and *Arpasia's* expressions of sorrow are really so perfectly cold and artificial, that the audience very naturally give themselves no concern about a matter which seems so little to agitate the parties themselves. But, let us turn to another scene. *Moneses* comes to *Tamerlane*, bewailing in bitter terms the loss of his affianced bride, upon which the cold-blooded philosopher thinks forsooth to console him, by proposing to enter upon a very laudable though somewhat arduous undertaking :—

" Thou shalt forget these lesser cares, Moneses ;
 Thou shalt, and help me to reform the world "

Finding, however, that this brilliant idea does not entirely reconcile *Monezes* to his lot, he breaks out into the following superb display of elocution, which proceeds with peculiar propriety from one who previously affects to execrate the "fell monster, war," and deplore the "destructive slaughter" to which it gives rise:—

"This dull despair

Is the soul's laziness. Rouse to the combat,
 And thou art sure to conquer. War shall restore thee;
 The sound of arms shall wake thy martial ardour,
 And cure this amorous sickness of thy soul,
 Begun by sloth, and nurs'd by too much ease.
 The idle god of love supinely dreams,
 Amidst inglorious shades and purling streams;
 In rosy fetters and fantastic chains,
 He binds deluded maids and simple swains;
 With soft enjoyments woos them to forget
 The hardy toils and labours of the great:
 But if the warlike-trumpet's loud alarms
 To virtuous acts excite, and manly arms,
 The coward boy avows his abject fear,
 On silken wings, sublime he cuts the air,
 Scar'd at the noble noise and thunder of the war."

All this jingling stuff about swains and chains, streams and dreams, would we confess have a very imposing effect in its proper place,—a Magazine Prize-Poem, Lines on the Prospect of War, or some such thing, though whether it is judiciously introduced in a tragedy we are much inclined to question. Thundered out with due emphasis and discretion, by a brazen-lunged performer, it will doubtless make the judicious stare, and split the ears of the groundlings, but beyond this it does not seem calculated to produce much impression either upon *Monezes* or the audience. It, however, answers *Tamerlane's* end; it silences his auditor, if it does not convince him, and is in truth unanswerable.

We might swell this preface with fifty other specimens of the kind, but these will suffice to illustrate the opinions we have advanced, and they who desire to see more, may meet with them in every page; we

prefer selecting a few of the brilliant passages which the piece contains, which, as we have already admitted, are by no means of rare occurrence. The description given of *Bajaset* in the first scene, though struck out of the acting-copy, deserves to be quoted for its vigour of thought and expression :—

“ For five returning suns, scarce was he seen
 By any, the most favour'd of his court,
 But in lascivious ease, among his women,
 Liv'd from the war retir'd; or else alone,
 In sullen mood, sat meditating plagues
 And ruin to the world; till yester morn,
 Like fire that lab'ring upwards rends the earth,
 He burst with fury from his tent, commanding
 All should be ready for the fight to-day.
 Thrice by our law and prophet has he sworn,
 By the world's Lord and Maker, lasting peace
 With our great master, and his royal friend,
 The Grecian Emperor; as oft, regardless
 Of plighted faith, with most unkingly baseness,
 Has ta'en th' advantage of their absent arms,
 Without a war proclaim'd, or cause pretended,
 To waste with sword and fire their fruitful fields:
 Like some accursed fiend, who, scap'd from hell,
 Poisons the balmy air through which he flies,
 He blasts the bearded corn and loaded branches,
 The lab'ring hinds' best hopes, and marks his way with ruin.”

The day after the victory is finely described in a short passage, containing a figure of infinite grandeur :—

“ The dreadful business of the war is over;
 And Slaughter, that from yester morn 'till even,
 With giant steps, pass'd striding o'er the field,
 Besmear'd and horrid with the blood of nations,
 Now weary sits among the mangled heaps,
 And slumbers o'er her prey; while from the camp,
 The cheerful sounds of ' Victory and Tamerlane'
 Beat the high arch of heav'n.”

There is also much eloquent beauty in *Tamerlane's* rebuke of the *Dervise* who attempts his life :—

“Thou maker of new faiths, that dar'st to build
Thy fond inventions on religion's name!—
Religion's lustre is, by native innocence,
Divinely pure, and simple from all arts;
You daub and dress her like a common mistress,
The harlot of your fancies; and by adding
False beauties, which she wants not, make the world
Suspect her angel's face is foul beneath,
And will not bear all lights. Hence, I have found thee.

Now learn the difference 'twixt thy faith and mine :—
Thine bids thee lift the dagger to my throat,
Mine can forgive the wrong, and bid thee live.
Keep thy own wicked secret, and be safe!
If thou repent'st, I have gain'd one to virtue,
And am, in that, rewarded for my mercy;
If thou continuest still to be the same,
'Tis punishment enough to be a villain!”

We select these passages as specimens of just sentiment and smooth versification, not as possessing any dramatic character, or as being adapted to the dialogue of a tragedy, which in truth they serve to encumber rather than adorn. Sometimes indeed Rowe rises to a more spirited and natural style of writing, as in *Bajazet's* suggestion to *Axalla*, in Act 3; but such examples are truly “few, and far between :”

“*Bajazet*. For our daughter thus
Mean'st thou to barter? Ha! I tell thee, christian,
There is but one, one dowry thou canst give,
And I can ask, worthy my daughter's love.
Axalla. Oh! name the mighty ransom; task my power;
Let there be danger, difficulty, death,
T'enhance the price—

Bajazet. I take thee at thy word :—
Bring me the Tartar's head!

Asalla. Ha!

Bajazet. Tamerlane's

That death, that deadly poison to my glory.

Asalla. Prodigious! horrid!

Selima. Lost! for ever lost.*

Bajazet. And couldst thou hope to bribe me with aught else?

With a vile peace, patch'd up on slavish terms?

With tributary kingship?—No!—To merit

A recompence from me, sate my revenge.

The Tartar is my bane, I cannot bear him;

One heaven and earth can never hold us both;

Still shall we hate, and with defiance deadly

Keep rage alive, till one be lost for ever:

As if two suns should meet in the meridian,

And strive in fiery combat for the passage."

Had Rowe always written in so animated a style as this, ours would have been a far pleasanter task, and "*Tamerlane*" would still have been a popular tragedy: as the play now stands, it is the poet himself who speaks throughout, and not his characters; we have little leisure to think of the two Emperors, of *Moneses*, or *Arpasia*, for we are never suffered to lose sight of Rowe himself.

The contention of *Tamerlane* and *Bajazet* had more than once formed the groundwork of a play in our language before it was selected by Rowe, and an Italian Opera on the subject was played at the King's Theatre in 1724. About 1588 it formed the story of one of our earliest tragedies, "*Tamburlaine the Great*," by Christopher Marlowe, which though stuffed with bombast and absurdities, is still a highly amusing composition, and contains some poetical passages of

* This hemistich curiously illustrates the mechanical, formal construction of the verse, which we have previously noticed, and which Rowe never lost sight of in his most animated moments. Five syllables were required to complete the line, and accordingly poor *Selima* was dragged forward with an unmeaning exclamation.

exquisite beauty. In 1681 a play called "Tamerlane" was written by one Saunders, who in the Epilogue, by Dryden, was described as a youth of great genius, but never fulfilled the promise of his early years by any after production. Rowe's tragedy was first performed in 1702, by the revolted company under Betterton, then established at a theatre in Bear-Yard, or Little Lincoln's Inn Fields. Downes says, it was "in general well acted, but chiefly the parts of Mr. Betterton, Mr. Vanbruggen, Mr. Powell, Madam Bracegirdle and Madam Barry, which made it a stock-play. Gildon, in his "Comparison between the Two Stages," 1702, attributes this success entirely to the admirable manner in which the characters were sustained: "Upon the Stage (says he) it may appear well, but he [Rowe] had some of the best tragedians in the world to act it, and who knows not the advantage a play receives from their mouths? Who knows not the effect of Betterton's fine acting? Who is not charmed with Mrs. Barry? What beauty do they not give to every thing they represent?"—Rowe, it is supposed, intended to represent William the 3rd and Louis 14th by the characters of *Tamerlane* and *Bajazet*; and the parallel, after being obscurely hinted at in the Prologue, seems to be pretty plainly avowed in the dedication of the play to Lord Hartington, if any conclusion may be drawn from the following coquettish allusion to it.—"Some people (who do me a very great honour in it) have fancied, that in the person of *Tamerlane*, I have alluded to the greatest character of the present age. I do not know whether I ought not to apprehend a great deal of danger from avowing a design like that. It may be a task indeed worthy the greatest genius which this or any other time has produced, but therefore I ought not to stand the shock of a parallel, lest it should be seen, to my disadvantage, how far the hero has transcended the poet's thoughts. There are many features, 'tis true, in that great man's life not unlike His Majesty; his courage, his piety, his moderation, his justice, and his fatherly love of his people; but above all, his hate of tyranny and oppression, and his zealous care for the common good of mankind, carry a strong resemblance of him. Several incidents are alike in their stories; and there wants nothing to His Majesty, but such a deciding victory as that by which Tamerlane gave peace to the world: that is yet to come; but I hope we may reasonably expect it from the unanimity of the present Parliament, and the formidable force which that unanimity will give life and vigour to."

Whether or not the belief was well founded, it procured for the play a surprising popularity. Louis was the bugbear of the day, and the people were delighted thus to have an opportunity of beholding him

“ Painted upon a pole, and underwrit,
Here you may see the tyrant.”

Long after the death of Louis, it was the fashion to perform this play annually, with an occasional Prologue, on the 4th and 5th of November, the anniversaries of William's birth, and landing in England, but the custom at length fell into disuse, nor did the result of the last attempt to revive it, which was, we believe at Covent Garden Theatre in Nov. 1819, appear to presage that managers will ever find it to their interest to resume the practice.

A slight sketch of Rowe's life was given in our edition of “ Jane Shore,” and we here subjoin a few illustrative notices, which we have gathered from various quarters, but principally from “ Spence's Anecdotes”.

Rowe in Pope's opinion, though he maintained a decent character, had no heart; Addison was once justly offended with him for some behaviour which arose from this defect, and estranged himself from his company, which Rowe felt very severely. Pope, their common friend, knowing this, took an opportunity on some occasion of Addison's advancement, to tell him how much poor Rowe was grieved at his displeasure, and what satisfaction he had shewn on hearing of his good fortune, ‘ which (added Pope) he expressed so naturally that I could not but think him sincere.’ Addison replied, ‘ I do not suspect that he feigned, but the levity of his heart is such, that he is struck with every new occurrence, and he would be affected just in the same manner, if he heard I was going to be hanged.’ Pope said, he could not deny that Addison understood Rowe well, but if this was really his opinion, he afterwards found reason to alter it, or else lied egregiously when he composed this heartless fellow's epitaph.

The following familiar epistle from Rowe to Pope has been preserved, though it possesses little interest, except as a record of the familiar terms upon which these two illustrious men lived with one another :

“ To Mr. Pope, at Mr. Jervas's, in Cleveland Court, by St. James's House, or at Button's Coffee House, in Covent Garden.

Thursday, May 20, 1713.

Dear Sir,

I don't know that I have a long time received a billet with greater pleasure than yours. Depend upon it, nothing could have been more agreeable, but yourself. To do something then that is perfectly kind, come and eat a bit of mutton with me to-morrow, at St. Jekwell. Bring whom you will along with you, though I can give you nothing but the aforesaid mutton and a cup of ale. It is but a little mile from Fox Hall, and you don't know how much you will oblige

Your most affectionate and faithful humble Servant,

N. Rowe.”

“ Rowe was bred first at Westminster school, and then at the Temple. He had about £300 a year, and his chambers there. His father was a Sergeant at Law. Rowe was of a pretty personage, and a very pretty sort of man.

“ Some one observing that they thought Rowe had been too grave to write light things, Pope said, ‘ He ! why he would laugh all day long ; he would do nothing else but laugh.’ ”

P.P.

Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation, is Two Hours and Forty minutes,

Stage Directions.

By **R.H.**..... is meant..... **Right Hand.**
L.H. **Left Hand.**
S. E...... **Second Entrance.**
U. E...... **Upper Entrance.**
MD. **Middle Door.**
D. F...... **Door in Flat.**
R.H.D...... **Right Hand Door.**
L.H.D...... **Left Hand Door.**

Costume.

TAMERLANE.

Morone coloured robe, white satin tunic, and white trowsers.

BAJAZET.

Green velvet ibid, yellow ibid, ibid, ibid.

AXALLA.

Roman shape robe, &c.

MONESES.

Ibid, ibid.

STRATOCLES.

Ibid, ibid.

PRINCE OF TANAIS.

Black velvet fly jacket, scarlet vest and trowsers.

OMAR.

Light blue ibid, ibid.

MIRVAN.

Crimson ibid, ibid.

ZAMA.

Yellow ibid, ibid.

HALY.

Blue ibid, ibid.

DERVISE.

Green robe, slate coloured, and vest.

ARPASIA.

White dress, trimmed with gold, and scarlet silk searf, embroidered with gold.

SELIMA.

White dress, trimmed with silver, and orange coloured velvet robe trimmed ibid.

Persons Represented.

Drury Lane, 1815. Covent Garden, 1819.

<i>Tamerlane</i>	Mr. Pope.	Mr. C. Kemble.
<i>Bajazet</i>	Mr. Kean	Mr. Macready.
<i>Axalla</i>	Mr. Wallack.	Mr. Connor.
<i>Moneses</i>	Mr. Rae.	Mr. Abbott.
<i>Stratocles</i>	Mr. Barnard.	Mr. Mears.
<i>Prince of Tanais</i>	Mr. Coveney.	Mr. Jefferies,
<i>Omar</i>	Mr. R. Phillips.	Mr. Comer.
<i>Mirvan</i>	Mr. Ebsworth.	Mr. Ryals.
<i>Zama</i>	Mr. Cooke.	Mr. King.
<i>Haly</i>	Mr. Kent.	Mr. Claremont.
<i>Dervise</i>	Mr. Powell.	Mr. Chapman.
<i>Arpasia</i>	Mrs. Bartley.	Mrs. Bunn.
<i>Selima</i>	Miss L. Kelly.	Miss Foote.

Parthian and Tartar Soldiers, Mutes belonging to Bajazet, and other Attendants.

SCENE—Tamerlane's Camp, near Angoria in Galatia.

TAMERLANE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Before Tamerlane's Tent.*

*The PRINCE of TANAI8, ZAMA, and MIRVAN,
discovered.*

Pr. Hail to the sun ! from whose returning light
The cheerful soldier's arms new lustre take,
To deck the pomp of battle. Oh, my friends !
Was ever such a glorious face of war ?
See, from this height, how all Galatia's plains
With nations numberless are cover'd o'er ;
Who, like a deluge, hide the face of earth,
And leave no object in the vast horizon,
But glitt'ring arms and skies.

Zam. Our Asian world
From this important day expects a lord ;
This day they hope an end of all their woes,
Of tyranny, of bondage, and oppression,
From our victorious emp'ror, Tamerlane.

Mir. Hear you of Bajazet ?

Pr. Late in the evening
A slave of near attendance on his person
'Scap'd to our camp. From him we learn'd the ty-
rant,

With rage redoubled, for the fight prepares ;
 Some accidental passion fires his breast,
 (Love, as 'tis thought, for a fair Grecian captive)
 And adds new horror to his native fury. (*Flourish.*)

Pr. But see his fate ! The mighty Tamerlane
 Comes, like the proxy of enquiring heav'n,
 To judge, and to redress. (*Flourish of Trumpets.*)

Euter TAMERLANE, preceded by *Soldiers*, R. H.

Tam. Yet, yet a little, and destructive slaughter
 Shall rage around, and mar this beauteous prospect.
 Pass but an hour, which stands betwixt the lives
 Of thousands and eternity, what change
 Shall hasty Death make in yon glitt'ring plain ?
 Oh, thou fell monster, War ! that in a moment
 Lay'st waste the noblest part of the creation,
 The boast and master-piece of the great Maker,
 That wears in vain th' impression of his image,
 Unprivileg'd from thee.—

Health to our friends, and to our arms success !

(*To the Prince, Zama, and Mirvan.*)

Such as the cause for which we fight deserves.

Pr. Nor can we ask beyond what heaven bestows,
 Preventing still our wishes. See, great sir,
 The universal joy your soldiers wear,
 Omen of prosp'rous battle.
 Impatient of the tedious night, in arms
 Watchful they stood, expecting op'ning day ;
 And now are hardly by their leaders held
 From darting on the foe.

Tam. Yes, prince, I mean to give a loose to war.
 This morn Axalla, with my Parthian horse,
 Arrives to join me. He who, like a storm,
 Swept with his flying squadrons all the plain
 Between Angoria's walls and yon tall mountains,
 That seem to reach the clouds ; and now he comes,
 Loaden with spoils and conquest, to my aid.

(*Trumpets flourish.*)

Zam. These trumpets speak his presence—

Enter AXALLA, L.H. who kneels to Tamerlane.

Tam. Welcome ! thou worthy partner of my laurels,
Thou brother of my choice, a bond more sacred
Than nature's brittle tie. By holy friendship,
Glory and fame stood still for thy arrival ;
My soul seem'd wanting in its better half,
And languish'd for thy absence.

Ax. My emperor ! My ever royal master !
To whom my secret soul more lowly bends,
Than forms of outward worship can express ;
How poorly does your soldier pay this goodness,
Who wears his every hour of life out for you !
Yet 'tis his all, and what he has he offers ;
Nor now disdain t' accept the gift he brings,

*Enter SELIMA, MONESES, STRATOCLES, Prisoners,
Guards, Mutes, &c. L.H.*

This earnest of your fortune. See, my lord,
The noblest prize that ever grac'd my arms !
Approach, my fair—

Tam. This is indeed to conquer,
And well to be rewarded for thy conquest ;
The bloom of op'ning flow'rs, unsullied beauty,
Softest and sweetest innocence she wears,
And looks like nature in the world's first spring—
But say, Axalla—

Sel. Most renown'd in war !

(Crosses to centre and kneels to Tamerlane.)

Look with compassion on a captive maid,
Though born of hostile blood ; nor let my birth,
Deriv'd from Bajazet, prevent that mercy
Which every subject of your fortune finds.
War is the province of ambitious man,
Who tears the miserable world for empire ;
Whilst our weak sex, incapable of wrong,
On either side claims privilege of safety.

Tam. (*Raising her.*) Rise, royal maid! the pride
of haughty pow'r
Pays homage, not receives it, from the fair.
Thy angry father fiercely calls me forth,
And urges we unwillingly to arms.
Yet, though our frowning battles menace death,
And mortal conflict, think not that we hold
Thy innocence and virtue as our foe.
Here, till the fate of Asia is decided,
In safety stay. To-morrow is your own,
Nor grieve for who may conquer, or who lose;
Fortune on either side shall wait thy wishes.

Sel. Where shall my wonder and my praise begin?
From the successful labours of thy arms;
Or from a theme more soft and full of peace,
Thy mercy and thy gentleness! Oh, Tamerlane!
What can I pay thee for this noble usage,
But grateful praise? So heaven itself is paid.
Give peace, ye pow'rs above, peace to mankind;
Nor let my father wage unequal war
Against the force of such united virtues.

Tam. Heav'n hear thy pious wish!—But since our
prospect
Looks darkly on futurity, till fate
Determine for us, let thy beauty's safety
Be my Axalla's care; in whose glad eyes
I read what joy the pleasing service gives him.

(*Selima retires.*)

Is there amongst thy other pris'ners aught (*To Axalla.*)
Worthy our knowledge?

Ax. This brave man, my lord,

(*Pointing to Moneses, who advances.*)

With long resistance held the combat doubtful.
His party, prest with numbers, soon grew faint,
And would have left their charge an easy prey;
Whilst he alone, undaunted at the odds,
Though hopeless to escape, fought well and firmly;
Nor yielded till, o'ermatch'd by many hands,
He seem'd to shame our conquest, whilst he own'd it.

Tam. Thou speak'st him as a soldier should a soldier,
dier,

Just to the worth he finds. I would not war
 (To *Moneses*.—*Axalla* and *Selima* converse
apart, R. H.)

With aught that wears thy virtuous stamp of greatness.

Thy habit speaks thee Christian.—Nay, yet more,
 My soul seems pleas'd to take acquaintance with thee,
 As if ally'd to thine : perhaps 'tis sympathy
 Of honest minds ; like strings wound up in music,
 Where, by one touch, both utter the same harmony.
 Why art thou then a friend to Bajazet ?
 And why my enemy ?

Mon. If human wisdom
 Could point out every action of our lives,
 And say,—Let it be thus in spite of fate
 Or partial fortune,—then I had not been
 The wretch I am.

Tam. The brave meet every accident
 With equal minds. Think nobler of thy foes,
 Than to account thy chance in war an evil.

Mon. Far, far from that : I rather hold it grievous
 That I was forc'd ev'n but to seem your enemy ;
 Nor think the baseness of a vanquish'd slave
 Moves me to flatter for precarious life,
 Or ill-brought freedom, when I swear, by heav'n,
 Were I to choose from all mankind a master,
 It should be Tamerlane.

Tam. A noble freedom
 Dwells with the brave, unknown to fawning sycophants,

And claims a privilege of being believ'd.
 I take thy praise as earnest of thy friendship.

Mon. Still you prevent the homage I shall offer.
 Oh, royal sir ! let my misfortunes plead,
 And wipe away the hostile mark I wore.
 I was, when not long since my fortune hail'd me,
 Bless'd to my wish ; I was the prince *Moneses* ;
 Born and bred up to greatness : witness the blood,
 Which, through successive heroes' veins, ally'd
 To our Greek emperors, roll'd down to me,

Feeds the bright flame of glory in my heart.

Tam. Ev'n that, that princely tie, should bind thee
to me,
If virtue were not more than all alliance.

(Crosses to R.H.)

Mon. I have a sister, oh, severe remembrance !
Our noble house's, nay, her sex's pride ;
Nor think my tongue too lavish, if I speak her
Fair as the fame of virtue, and yet chaste
As its cold precepts ; wise beyond her sex
And blooming youth ; soft as forgiving mercy,
Yet greatly brave and jealous for her honour :
Such as she was, to say I barely lov'd her,
Is poor to my soul's meaning. From our infancy
There grew a mutual tenderness between us,
Till not long since her vows were kindly plighted
To a young lord, the equal of her birth.
The happy day was fix'd, and now approaching,
When faithless Bajazet (upon whose honour,
In solemn treaty given, the Greeks depended)
With sudden war broke in upon the country,
Secure of peace, and for defence unready.

Tam. Let majesty no more be held divine,
Since kings, who are call'd gods, profane themselves.

Mon. Among the wretches, whom that deluge
swept

Away to slavery, myself and sister,
Then passing near the frontiers, to the court,
(Which waited for her nuptials) were surpris'd,
And made the captives of the tyrant's pow'r.
Soon as we reach'd his court, we found our usage,
Beyond what we expected, fair and noble ;
'Twas then the storm of your victorious arms
Look'd black, and seem'd to threaten, when he prest me
(By oft repeating instances) to draw
My sword for him : but when he found my soul
Disdain'd his purpose, he more fiercely told me,
That my Arpasia, my lov'd sister's fate,
Depended on my courage shewn for him.
I had long learnt to hold myself at nothing ;
But for her sake, to ward the blow from her,

I bound my service to the man I hated.
Six days are past since, by the sultan's order,
I left the pledge of my return behind,
And went to guard this princess to his camp :
The rest, the brave Axalla's fortune tells you.

Tam. Wisely the tyrant strove to prop his cause,
By leagu'ing with thy virtue ; but just heav'n
Has torn thee from his side, and left him naked
To the avenging bolt that drives upon him.
Forget the name of captive, and I wish
I could as well restore that fair-one's freedom,
Whose loss hangs heavy on thee : yet, ere night,
Perhaps, we may deserve thy friendship nobler ;
Th' approaching storm may cast thy shipwreck'd wealth
Back to thy arms : till that be past, since war
(Though in the justest cause) is ever doubtful,
I will not ask thy sword to aid my victory,
Lest it should hurt that hostage of thy valour
Our common foe detains.

Mon. Let Bajazet
Bend to his yoke repining slaves by force ;
You, sir, have found a nobler way to empire,
Lord of the willing world.

Tam. Haste, my Axalla, to dispose with safety
The beauteous charge, and on the foe revenge
The pain which absence gives ; thy other care,
Honour and arms, now summon thy attendance.
Now do thy office well, my soul ! Remember
The cause, the cause of heaven and injur'd earth.
O thou Supreme ! if thy great spirit warms
My glowing breast, and fires my soul to arms,
Grant that my sword, assisted by thy pow'r,
This day may peace and happiness restore,
That war and lawless rage may vex the world no
more.

[*Exeunt Tamerlane, Selima, Moneses, Stratocles, Prince of Tanais, Zama, Mirvan, and Attendants, R.H.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Tamerlane's Camp.*

Enter MONESES, R.H.

Mon. The dreadful business of the war is o'er ;
 And slaughter, that from yester' morn till even,
 With giant steps, pass'd striding o'er the field,
 Besmear'd and horrid with the blood of nations,
 Now weary sits among the mangled heaps,
 And slumbers o'er her prey ; while from this camp
 The cheerful sounds of victory and Tamerlane
 Beat the high arch of heaven.

Enter STRATOCLES, L.H.

My Stratocles !
 Most happily return'd : might I believe
 Thou bring'st me any joy ?
Stra. With my best diligence,
 This night, I have enquir'd of what concerns you.
 Scarce was the sun, who shone upon the horror
 Of the past day, sunk to the western ocean,
 When, by permission from the prince Axalla,
 I mixt among the tumult of the warriors
 Returning from the battle : here, a troop
 Of hardy Parthians, red with honest wounds,
 Confest the conquest they had well deserv'd :
 There, a dejected crew of wretched captives,
 Followed sadly after
 The haughty victor's heels. But that which fully
 Crown'd the success of Tamerlane, was Bajazet,
 Fall'n, like the proud archangel, from the height
 Where once (ev'n next to majesty divine)
 Enthron'd he sat, down to the vile descent
 And lowness of a slave : but, oh ! to speak
 The rage, the fierceness, and the indignation,
 It bars all words, and cuts description short.

Mon. Then he is fallen ! that comet, which on
high

Portended ruin : he has spent his blaze,
And shall distract the world with fears no more.
But say, my friend, what hear'st thou of Arpasia ?
For there my thoughts, my every care is center'd.

Stra. Tho' on that purpose still I bent my search,
Yet nothing certain could I gain, but this :
That, in the pillage of the sultan's tent,
Some women were made pris'ners, who this morning
Were to be offer'd to the emperor's view ;
Their names and qualities, though oft enquiring,
I could not learn.

Mon. Then must my soul still labour
Beyond uncertainty and anxious doubt.

Stra. 'Twas said, not far from hence
The captives were to wait the emperor's passage.

Mon. Haste we to find the place. Oh, my Arpasia !
Shall we then meet ?

When thy lov'd sight shall bless my eyes again, }
Then I will own, I ought not to complain, }
Since that sweet hour is worth whole years of pain. }
[*Exeunt*, L.H.]

SCENE II.—*The Inside of a Magnificent Tent.*
Symphony of warlike Music.

TAMERLANE, AXALLA, R.H. PRINCE OF TANAI8,
ZAMA, and MIRVAN, L.H. Soldiers, and other At-
tendants, discovered.

Ax. From this auspicious day the Parthian name
Shall date its birth of empire, and extend,
Ev'n from the dawning East to utmost Thule,
The limits of its sway.

Pr. Nations unknown,
Where yet the Roman eagles never flew,
Shall pay their homage to victorious Tamerlane ;
Bend to his valour and superior virtue,
And own that conquest is not given by chance ;

But, bound by fatal and resistless merit,
Waits on his arms.

Tam. It is too much : you dress me,
Like an usurper, in the borrow'd attributes
Of injur'd heaven. Can we call conquest ours ?
Shall man, this pigmy, with a giant's pride,
Vaunt of himself, and say, 'Thus have I done this ?
Oh, vain pretence to greatness ! Like the moon,
We borrow all the brightness which we boast ;
Dark in ourselves, and useless. If that hand
That rules the fate of battles, strike for us,
Crown us with fame, and gild our clay with honour,
'Twere most ungrateful to disown the benefit,
And arrogate a praise which is not ours.

As. With such unshaken temper of the soul
To bear the swelling tide of prosp'rous fortune,
Is to deserve that fortune : in adversity,
The mind grows tough by buffeting the tempest,
Which, in success dissolving, sinks to ease,
And loses all her firmness.

Tam. Oh, Axalla !
Could I forget I am a man, as thou art ;
Would not the winter's cold, or summer's heat,
Sickness, or thirst, and hunger, all the train
Of nature's clamorous appetites, asserting
An equal right in kings and common men,
Reprove me daily ?—No—If I boast of aught,
Be it, to have been heaven's happy instrument,
The means of good to all my fellow-creatures :
This is a king's best praise. *(Crosses to R.H.)*

Enter OMAR, L.H.S.E.

Om. Honour and fame

(Bowling to Tamerlane, who turns.)

For ever wait the emperor ! May our prophet
Give him ten thousand thousand days of life,
And every day like this ! The captive sultan,
Fierce in his bonds, and at his fate repining,
Attends your sacred will.

Tam. Let him approach.

Enter BAJAZET, two Gentlemen and Soldiers, L.H.S.E.

When I survey the ruins of this field,
The wild destruction which thy fierce ambition
Has dealt among mankind, (so many widows
And helpless orphans has thy battle made,
That half our eastern world this day are mourners)
Well may I, in behalf of heav'n and earth,
Demand from thee atonement for this wrong.

Baj. Make thy demand to those that own thy
pow'r,
Know, I am still beyond it; and though fortune
(Curse on that changeling deity of fools!)
Has stript me of the train and pomp of greatness,
That outside of a king, yet still my soul,
Fix'd high, and of itself alone dependent,
Is ever free and royal, and ev'n now,
As at the head of battle, does defy thee.

I know what pow'r the chance of war has giv'n,
And dare thee to the use on't. This vile speeching,
This after-game of words, is what most irks me;
Spare that, and for the rest 'tis equal all—
Be it as it may.

Tam. Well was it for the world,
When on their borders neighbouring princes met,
Frequent in friendly parle, by cool debates
Preventing wasteful war; such should our meeting
Have been, hadst thou but held in just regard
The sanctity of leagues so often sworn to.
Canst thou believe thy prophet, or what's more,
That Pow'r Supreme which made thee and thy pro-
phet,

Will, with impunity, let pass that breach
Of sacred faith giv'n to the royal Greek?

Baj. Thou pedant talker! Ha! art thou a king,
Possess'd of sacred pow'r, heav'n's darling attribute,
And dost thou prate of leagues, and oaths, and pro-
phets?

I hate the Greek (perdition on his name!)

As I do thee, and would have met you both
As death does human nature, for destruction.

Tam. Causeless to hate, is not of human kind :
The savage brute that haunts in woods remote
And desert wilds, tears not the fearful traveller,
If hunger or some injury, provoke not.

Baj. Can a king want a cause, when empire bids
Go on ? What is he born for, but ambition ?
It is his hunger, 'tis his call of nature,
The noble appetite which will be satisfied,
And, like the food of gods, make him immortal.

Tam. Henceforth I will not wonder we were foes,
Since souls, that differ so, by nature hate,
And strong antipathy forbids their union.

(Crosses to R.H.)

Baj. The noble fire that warms me, does indeed
Transcend thy coldness. I am pleased we differ,
Nor think alike.

Tam. No—(Turns back.)—for I think like man,
Thou like a monster, from whose baleful presence
Nature starts back ; and though she fix'd her stamp
On thy rough mass, and mark'd thee for a man,
Now, conscious of her error, she disclaims thee,
As form'd for her destruction.—

'Tis true I am a king, as thou hast been :
Honour and glory, too, have been my aim :
But, though I dare face death, and all the dangers
Which furious war wears in its bloody front,
Yet would I choose to fix my name by peace,
By justice, and by mercy ; and to raise
My trophies on the blessings of mankind :
Nor would I buy the empire of the world
With ruin of the people whom I sway,
On forfeit of my honour.

(Crosses to R.H.)

Baj. Prophet, I thank thee—
Damnation !—Could'st thou rob me of my glory,
To dress up this tame king, this preaching dervise ?
Unfit for war, thou should'st have liv'd secure
In lazy peace, and with debating senates
Shar'd a precarious sceptre, sat tamely still,

And let bold factions canton out thy pow'r,
 And wrangle for the spoils they robb'd thee of;
 Whilst I (curse on the pow'r that stops my ardour!)
 Would, like a tempest, rush amidst the nations,
 Be greatly terrible, and deal, like Alha,
 My angry thunder on the frightened world!

Tam. The world!—'twould be too little for thy
 pride:

Thou would'st scale heaven—

Baj. I would!—Away! my soul
 Disdains thy conference. *(Crosses to L.H.)*

Tam. Thou vain, rash thing,
 That, with gigantic insolence, hast dar'd
 To lift thy wretched self above the stars,
 And mate with pow'r almighty: thou art fallen!

Baj. 'Tis false! I am not fallen from aught I have
 been;

At least my soul resolves to keep her state,
 And scorns to take acquaintance with ill fortune.

Tam. Almost beneath my pity art thou fall'n;
 Since, while th' avenging hand of heaven is on thee,
 And presses to the dust thy swelling soul,
 Fool-hardy, with the stronger thou contendest.
 To what vast heights had thy tumultuous temper
 Been hurried, if success had crown'd thy wishes!
 Say, what had I to expect if thou hadst conquer'd?

Baj. Oh, glorious thought! by heav'n I will enjoy it,
 Though but in fancy; imagination shall
 Make room to entertain the vast idea.

Oh, had I been the master but of yesterday,
 The world, the world had felt me; and for thee,
 I had used thee as thou art to me—a dog,
 The object of my scorn, and mortal hatred:
 I would have taught thy neck to know my weight,
 And mounted from that footstool to my saddle!
 Then, when thy daily servile task was done,
 I would have cag'd thee for the scorn of slaves,
 Till thou hadst begg'd to die; and ev'n that mercy
 I had denied thee. Now thou know'st my mind,
 And question me no farther.

Tam. Well dost thou teach me
 What justice should exact of thee. Mankind,
 With one consent, cry out for vengeance on thee ;
 Loudly they call to cut off this league-breaker,
 This wild destroyer, from the face of earth.

Baj. Do it, and rid thy shaking soul at once
 Of its worst fear.

Tam. Why slept the thunder
 That should have armed the idol deity,
 And given thee pow'r, ere yester sun was set,
 To shake the soul of Tamerlane. Hadst thou an arm
 To make thee fear'd, thou should'st have prov'd it on
 me,

Amidst the sweat and blood of yonder field,
 When through the tumult of the war I sought thee,
 Fenc'd in with nations.

Baj. Curse upon the stars,
 That fated us to different scenes of slaughter !
 Oh, could my sword have met thee——

Tam. Thou hadst then,
 As now, been in my pow'r, and held thy life
 Dependent on my gift. Yes, Bajazet,
 I bid thee, live :— *(Crosses to L. H.)*
 Nay, more : could'st thou forget thy brutal fierceness,
 And form thyself to manhood, I would bid thee
 Live, and be still a king, that thou may'st learn
 What man should be to man, in war remembering
 The common tie and brotherhood of kind.
 This royal tent, with such of thy domestics
 As can be found, shall wait upon thy service ;
 Nor will I use my fortune to demand
 Hard terms of peace ; but such as thou may'st offer
 With honour, I with honour may receive.

Baj. Ha ! say'st thou—no—our prophet's vengeance
 blast me,
 If thou shalt buy my friendship with thy empire !
 Damnation on thee, thou smooth fawning talker !
 Give me again my chains, that I may curse thee,
 And gratify my rage : or, if thou wilt
 Be a vain fool, and play with thy perdition,

Remember, I am thy foe, and hate thee deadly :
Thy folly on thy head !

Tam. Be still my foe.

Great minds, like heav'n, are pleas'd in doing good,
Though the ungrateful subjects of their favours
Are barren in return. Virtue still does
With scorn the mercenary world regard,
Where abject souls do good, and hope reward :
Above the worthless trophies men can raise,
She seeks not honours, wealth, nor airy praise,
But with herself, herself the goddess pays. }

[*Exeunt Tamerlane, Axalla, Prince of Tanais,
Miroan, Zama, and Attendants, R.H.*]

Baj. Come, lead me to my dungeon; plunge me
down

Deep from the hated sight of man and day ;
Where, under covert of the friendly darkness,
My soul may brood at leisure' o'er its anguish.

(*Crosses to R.H.*)

Om. Our royal master would, with noble usage,
Make your misfortunes light : he bids you hope—

Baj. I tell thee, slave, I have shook hands with
hope,

And all my thoughts are rage, despair, and horror !

[*Exeunt Omar and Guards, R.H.*]

Ha ! wherefore am I thus !—Perdition seize me,
But my cold blood runs shiv'ring to my heart !
The rage and fiercer passions of my breast
Are lost in new confusions.

Enter HALY, R.H.

Arpasia !—Haly !

Ha. Oh, emperor ! for whose hard fate our prophet
And all the heroes of thy sacred race
Are sad in paradise, thy faithful Haly,
The slave of all thy pleasures, in this ruin,
This universal shipwreck of thy fortunes,
Has gather'd up this treasure for thy arms.

Enter ARPASIA, R.H.

Nor ev'n the victor, haughty Tamerlane,
(By whose command once more thy slave beholds thee)
Denies this blessing to thee, but with honour
Renders thee back thy queen, thy beauteous bride.

Baj. Oh, had her eyes with pity seen my sorrows,
Had she the fondness of a tender bride,
Heav'n could not have bestow'd a greater blessing,
And love had made amends for loss of empire.
But see, what fury dwells upon her charms!
What lightning flashes from her angry eyes!
With a malignant joy she views my ruin:
Even beauteous in her hatred, still she charms me,
And awes my fierce tumultuous soul to love.

Arp. And dar'st thou hope, thou tyrant ravisher!
That heaven has any joy in store for thee?
Look back upon the sum of thy past life,
Where tyranny, oppression, and injustice,
Perjury, murders, swell the black account;
Where lost Arpasia's wrongs stand bleeding fresh,
Thy last recorded crime. But heaven has found thee;
At length the tardy vengeance has o'erta'en thee.
My weary soul shall bear a little longer
The pain of life, to call for justice on thee:
That once complete, sink to the peaceful grave,
And lose the memory of my wrongs and thee.

Baj. Thou rail'st! I thank thee for it: be perverse,
And muster all the woman in thy soul;
Goad me with curses, be a very wife,
That I may fling off this tame love, and hate thee.

Enter MONESES, L.H.—Bajazet starts.

Ha! keep thy temper, heart; nor take alarm
At a slave's presence. (*Retires.*)

Mon. It is Arpasia!—Leave me, thou cold fear.
Sweet as the rosy morn she breaks upon me;

And sorrow, like the night's unwholesome shade,
Gives way before the golden dawn she brings.

Baj. (*Advancing towards him.*) Ha! Christian!—
Is it well that we meet thus?

Is this thy faith?

Mon. Why does thy frowning brow
Put on this storm of fury? Is it strange
We should meet here, companions of misfortune,
The captives of one common chance of war?
Nor should'st thou wonder that my sword has fail'd
Before the fortune of victorious Tamerlane,
When thou, with nations like the sanded shore,
With half the warring world upon thy side,
Could'st not stand up against this dreadful battle,
That crush'd thee with its shock. Thy men can wit-
ness,

Those cowards that forsook me in the combat,
My sword was not inactive.

Baj. No—'tis false!

Where is my daughter, thou vile Greek? Thou hast
Betray'd her to the Tartar; or even worse,
Pale with thy fear, didst lose her like a coward;
And, like a coward now, would'st cast the blame
On fortune and ill stars.

Mon. Ha! said'st thou like a coward?
What sanctity, what majesty divine
Hast thou put on, to guard thee from my rage,
That thus thou dar'st to wrong me?

Baj. Out, thou slave,
And know me for thy lord—

Mon. I tell thee, tyrant,
When in the pride of pow'r thou sat'st on high,
When like an idol thou wert vainly worshipp'd
By profane wretches, born with slavish souls;
Ev'n when thou wert a king, thou wert no more
Nor greater than Moneses, born of a race
Royal and great as thine. What art thou now, then?
The fate of war has set thee with the lowest;
And captives (like the subjects of the grave)
Losing distinction, serve one common lord.

Baj. Brav'd by this dog! Now give loose to rage,
And curse thyself; curse thy false cheating prophet.
Ha! yet there's some revenge. Hear me, thou Christian!

Thou left'st that sister with me: thou imposter!
Thou boaster of thy honesty! thou liar!
But take her to thee back.

Now to explore my prison—if it holds
Another plague like this.—The restless damn'd
(If mufties lie not) wander thus in hell:
From scorching flames to chilling frosts they run,
Then from their frosts to fires return again,
And only prove variety of pain.

[*Exeunt Bajazet and Haly, R.H.*]

Arp. Stay, Bajazet, I charge thee, by my wrongs,
Stay, and unfold a tale of so much horror,
As only fits thy telling!—Oh, Moneses!

Mon. Why dost thou weep! Why this tempestuous
passion,
That stops thy falt'ring tongue short on my name?
Oh, speak! unveil this mystery of sorrow.

Arp. Thou art undone! lost, ruin'd, and undone!

Mon. I will not think 'tis so, while I have thee;
While thus 'tis given to fold thee in my arms,
The sad remembrance of past woes is lost!

Arp. Forbear to soothe thy soul with flattering
thoughts
Of evils overpast, and joys to come:
Our woes are like the genuine shade beneath,
Where fate cuts off the very hopes of day,
And everlasting night and horror reign.

Mon. By all the tenderness and chaste endearments
Of our past love, I charge thee, my Arpasia,
To ease my soul of doubts! Give me to know,
At once, the utmost malice of my fate!

Arp. Take then thy wretched share in all I suffer,
Still partner of my heart! Scarce hadst thou left
The sultan's camp, when the imperious tyrant,
Soft'ning the pride and fierceness of his temper,
With gentle speech made offer of his love.

Amaz'd, as at the shock of sudden pain,
 I started into tears, and often urg'd
 (Though still in vain) the difference of our faiths.
 At last, as flying to the utmost refuge,
 With lifted hands and streaming eyes, I own'd
 The fraud which, when we first were made his pri-
 soners,

I forc'd thee to put on——

Thy borrow'd name of brother, mine of sister ;
 Hiding between that veil the nearer tie
 Our mutual vows had made before the priest.
 Kindling to rage at hearing of my story,
 Then, be it so, he cried : think'st thou thy vows,
 Giv'n to a slave, shall bar me from thy beauties ?
 Then bade the priest pronounce the marriage rites ;
 Which he perform'd ; whilst shrieking with despair,
 I call'd in vain the pow'rs of heav'n to aid me.

Mon. Villain ! Imperial villain !—Oh, the coward !
 Aw'd by his guilt, though back'd by force and pow'r,
 He durst not to my face avow his purpose ;
 But, in my absence, like a lurking thief,
 Stole on my treasure, and at once undid me.
 Oh, I cannot bear it !

Thou lovely hoard of sweets, where all my joys
 Were treasur'd up, to have thee rifled thus !
 But I will have thee from him. Tamerlane
 (The sovereign judge of equity on earth)
 Shall do me justice on this mighty robber,
 And render back thy beauties to Moneses.

Arp. And who shall render back my peace, my
 honour ?

I am the tyrant's wife !—Oh, fatal title !—
 And, in the sight of all the saints, have sworn,
 By honour, womanhood, and blushing shame,
 To know no second bride-bed but my grave !

Mon. Tell me, Arpasia—say, what joys are those
 That wait to crown the wretch who suffers here ?
 Oh, tell me, and sustain my failing faith.

Arp. Imagine 'tis a track of endless joys,
 Which fancy cannot paint,

Without satiety or interruption :
 Imagine 'tis to meet, and part no more.
 Oh, my Moneses ! now the surges rise,
 The swelling sea breaks in between our barks,
 And drives us to our fate on different rocks.
 Farewell !—My soul lives with thee.

Mon. Death is parting,
 'Tis the last sad adieu 'twixt soul and body.
 But this is somewhat worse—my joy, my comfort,
 All that was left in life, flees after thee ;
 My aching sight hangs on thy parting beauties,
 Thy lovely eyes, all drown'd in floods of sorrow.
 So sinks the setting sun beneath the waves,
 And leaves the traveller in pathless woods,
 Benighted and forlorn : thus, with sad eyes,
 Westward he turns, to mark the light's decay,
 Till, having lost the last faint glimpse of day,
 Cheerless, in darkness, he pursues his way. }

[*Exeunt, Moneses L.H. and Arpasia R.H.*]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Inside of the Royal Tent.*

Enter AXALLA and SELIMA, L.H.

Ax. Why was I ever blest ! Why is remembrance
 Rich with a thousand pleasing images
 Of past enjoyments, since 'tis but to plague me ?
 When thou art mine no more, what will it ease me
 To think of all the golden minutes past,
 To think that thou wert kind, and I was happy,
 But, like an angel fall'n from bliss, to curse
 My present state, and mourn the heav'n I've lost ?

Sel. Hope better for us both ; nor let thy fears,

Like an unlucky omen, cross my way.
 My father, rough and stormy in his nature,
 To me was always gentle, and, with fondness
 Paternal, ever met me with a blessing.
 Oft, when offence had stirr'd him to such fury,
 That not grave counsellors, for wisdom fam'd,
 Nor hardly captains, that had fought his battles,
 Presum'd to speak, but struck with awful dread,
 Were hush'd as death; yet has he smil'd on me,
 Kiss'd me, and bade me utter all my purpose,
 Till with my idle prattle I had sooth'd him,
 And won him from his anger.

Ax. Oh, I know

Thou hast a tongue to charm the wildest tempers:
 But, oh, when I revolve each circumstance,
 My christian faith, my service closely bound
 To Tamerlane, my master and my friend,
 Tell me, my charmer, if my fears are vain?
 Think what remains for me, if the fierce sultan
 Should doom thy beauties to another's bed?

Sel. 'Tis a sad thought: but, to appease thy doubts,
 Here, in the awful sight of heaven, I vow
 No pow'r shall e'er divide me from thy love,
 Ev'n duty shall not force me to be false.
 My cruel stars may tear thee from my arms,
 But never from my heart.

Ax. But see, the sultan comes! (*They retire, L.H.*)

Enter BAJAZET, R.H.

Baj. To have a nauseous courtesy forc'd on me,
 Spite of my will, by an insulting foe!
 Ha! they would break the fierceness of my temper,
 And make me supple for their slavish purpose.
 Curse on their fawning arts! (*Crosses to centre.*)

Sel. (*Comes forward and kneels to Bajazet.*) My
 lord! my royal father!

Baj. Ha! what art thou?
 That in a form
 So known, so lov'd, hast left thy paradise,

For joyless prison, for this place of woe ?
Art thou my Selima ?

Sel. Have you forgot me ?

Your Selima, your daughter whom you lov'd,
The fondling once of her dear father's arms,
Is come to claim her share in his misfortunes ;
To help to wear the tedious minutes out,
To soften bondage and the loss of empire.

Baj. Now, by our prophet, if my wounded mind
Could know a thought of peace, it would be now.
Ev'n from thy prattling infancy, thou wert
My joy, my little angel : smiling comfort
Came with thee still to glad me. Now I'm curs'd
Ev'n in thee too. Reproach and infamy
Attend the Christian dog t'whom thou wert trusted.
To see thee here—'twere better see thee dead !

Ax. Thus Tamerlane, to royal Bajazet
With kingly greeting, sends : since with the brave
(The bloody business of the fight once ended)
Stern hate and opposition ought to cease :
Thy queen already to thy arms restor'd,
Receive this second gift, thy beauteous daughter ;
And if there be aught farther in thy wish,
Demand with honour, and obtain it freely.

Baj. Bear back the fulsome greeting to thy master ;
Tell him, I'll none on't. Had he been a god,
All his omnipotence could not restore
My fame diminish'd, loss of sacred honour,
The radiancy of majesty eclips'd :
For aught besides, it is not worth my care ;
The giver and his gifts are both beneath me.

Ax. Enough of war the wounded earth has known ;
Weary at length, and wasted with destruction,
Sadly she rears her ruin'd head, to shew
Her cities humbled, and her countries spoil'd.
Oh, sultan ! by the power divine I swear,
With joy I would resign the savage trophies
In blood and battle gain'd, could I atone
The fatal breach 'twixt thee and Tamerlane ;
And think a soldier's glory well bestow'd,

To buy mankind a peace.

Baj. And what art thou,
That dost presume to mediate 'twixt the rage
Of angry kings?

Ax. A prince, born of the noblest,
And of a soul that answers to that birth,
That dares not but do well. Thou dost put on
A forc'd forgetfulness, thus not to know me,
A guest so lately to thy court, then meeting
On gentler terms.

Sel. Could aught efface the merit
Of brave Axalla's name, yet, when your daughter
Shall tell how well, how nobly she was us'd,
How light this gallant prince made all her bondage,
Most sure, the royal Bajazet will own
That honour stands indebted to such goodness,
Nor can a monarch's friendship more than pay it.

Baj. Ha! know'st thou that, fond girl?—Go—'tis
not well:

And when thou could'st descend to take a benefit
From a vile Christian, and thy father's foe,
Thou did'st an act dishonest to thy race:
Henceforth, unless thou mean'st to cancel all
My share in thee, and write thyself a bastard,
Die, starve, know any evil, any pain,
Rather than taste a mercy from these dogs!

(*Crosses to R.H.*)

Sel. Alas, Axalla!

Ax. Weep not, lovely maid!

I swear, one pearly drop from those fair eyes
Would overpay the service of my life!
One sigh from thee has made a large amends
For all thy angry father's frowns and fierceness.

Baj. Oh, my curs'd fortune!—(*Crosses to centre.*)

—Am I fall'n thus low!

Dishonour'd to my face! Thou earth-born thing!
Thou clod! how hast thou dar'd to lift thy eyes
Up to the sacred race of mighty Ottoman,
Whom kings, whom e'en our prophet's holy offspring,
At distance have beheld? And what art thou?

What glorious title blazons out thy birth?
Thou vile obscurity! Ha!—say—thou base one!

Ax. Thus challeng'd, virtue, modest as she is,
Stands up to do herself a common justice;
To answer and assert that inborn merit,
That worth, which conscious to herself she feels.
Were honour to be scann'd by long descent
From ancestors illustrious, I could vaunt
A lineage of the greatest;
Heroes and godlike patriots, who subdu'd
The world by arms and virtue, and, being Romans,
Scorn'd to be kings; but that be their own praise:
Nor will I borrow merit from the dead,
Myself an undeserver. I could prove
My friendship such as thou might'st deign t' accept
With honour, when it comes with friendly office,
To render back thy crown and former greatness;
And yet, e'en this, e'en all is poor, when Selima,
With matchless worth, weighs down the adverse scale.

Baj. To give me back what yesterday took from me,
Would be to give like heaven, when, having finish'd
This world, (the goodly work of his creation)
He bade his favourite, man, be lord of all.
But this—

Ax. Nor is this gift beyond my pow'r.
Oft has the mighty master of my arms
Urg'd me, with large ambition, to demand
Crowns and dominions from his bounteous pow'r:
'Tis true, I wav'd the proffer, and have held it
The worthier choice to wait upon his virtues,
To be the friend and partner of his wars,
Than to be Asia's lord. Nor wonder, then,
If, in the confidence of such a friendship,
I promise boldly, for the royal giver,
Thy crown and empire.

Baj. For our daughter thus
Mean'st thou to barter?—Ha! I tell thee, Christian,
There is but one, one dowry thou can'st give,
And I can ask, worthy my daughter's love.

Ax. Oh, name the mighty ransom; task my pow'r;

Let there be danger, difficulty, death,
T' enhance the price.

Baj. I take thee at thy word :
Bring me the Tartar's head !

Ax. Ha !

Baj. Tamerlane's !
That death, that deadly poison to my glory.

Ax. Prodigious ! horrid !

Sel. Lost, for ever lost !

Baj. And could'st thou hope to bribe me with aught
else ?

With a vile peace patch'd up on slavish terms ?
With tributary kingship ?—No !—To merit

A recompense from me, sate my revenge.

The Tartar is my bane : I cannot bear him :

One heav'n and earth can never hold us both :

Still shall we hate, till one be lost for ever :

As if two suns should meet in the meridian,
And strive in fiery combat for the passage.

(Crosses to R.H.)

Weep'st thou, fond girl ? Now, as thy king and fa-
ther,

I charge thee drive this slave from thy remembrance !

Hate shall be pious in thee. Come and join

To curse thy father's foes.

[*Bajazet takes the right hand of Selima, and
leads her off, R.H. she looking back on Axalla.*

Ax. 'Tis what I fear'd : fool that I was t' obey !

The coward Love, that could not bear her frown,

Has wrought his own undoing.

He bade me take her : but, oh, gracious honour !

Upon what terms ?—My soul yet shudders at it !—

The head of Tamerlane ! monstrous impiety !

Bleed, bleed to death, my heart ; be virtue's martyr.

Oh, emperor ! I own, I ought to give thee

Some nobler mark than dying, of my faith.

Then let the pains I feel my friendship prove ;

'Tis easier far to die, than cease to love.

[*Exit, L.H.*

SCENE II.—*Tamerlane's Camp.*

Enter TAMERLANE and a DERVISE, L.H.

Tam. Thou bring'st me thy credentials from the highest,
From Alha and our prophet. Speak thy message:
It must import the best and noblest ends.

Der. Thus speaks our holy Mahomet, who has giv'n thee
To reign and conquer:—Ill dost thou repay
The bounties of his hand, unmindful of
The fountain whence thy streams of greatness flow.
Thou hast forgot high heav'n; hast beaten down
And trampled on religion's sanctity.

Tam. Now, as I am a soldier and a king,
(The greatest names of honour) do but make
Thy imputation out, and Tamerlane
Shall do thee ample justice on himself.
So much the sacred name of heaven awes me,
Could I suspect my soul of harbouring aught
To its dishonour, I would search it strictly,
And drive the offending thought with fury forth.

Der. Yes, thou hast hurt our holy prophet's honour,
By fostering the pernicious Christian sect;
Those whom his sword pursu'd with fell destruction,
Thou tak'st into thy bosom, to thy councils;
They are thy only friends. The true believers
Mourn to behold thee favour this Axalla.

Tam. I fear me, thou outgo'st the prophet's order,
And bring'st his venerable name to shelter
A rudeness ill-becoming thee to use,
Or me to suffer. When thou nam'st my friend,
Thou nam'st a man beyond a monk's discerning,
Virtuous and great, a warrior and a prince.

Der. He is a Christian; there our law condemns him,
Although he were ev'n all thou speak'st, and more.

Tam. 'Tis false! no law divine condemns the virtuous,
 For differing from the rules your schools devise.
 Look round, how Providence bestows alike
 Sunshine and rain, to bless the fruitful year,
 On different nations, all of different faiths;
 And, though by several names and titles worshipp'd,
 Heaven takes the various tribute of their praise;
 Since all agree to own, at least to mean,
 One best, one greatest, only Lord of all.

Der. Most impious and profane!—Nay, frown not, prince;
 Full of the prophet, I despise the danger
 Thy angry power may threaten. I command thee
 To hear and to obey; since thus says Mahomet:
 Why have I made thee dreadful to the nations?
 Why have I giv'n thee conquest? but to spread
 My sacred law ev'n to the utmost earth,
 And make my holy Mecca the world's worship.
 Go on, and wheresoe'er thy arms shall prosper,
 Plant there the prophet's name; with sword and fire,
 Drive out all other faiths; and let the world
 Confess him only.

Tam. Had he but commanded
 My sword to conquer all, to make the world
 Know but one lord, the task were not so hard;
 'Twere but to do what has been done already;
 And Philip's son, and Cæsar, did as much:
 But, to subdue th' unconquerable mind;
 To make one reason have the same effect
 Upon all apprehensions; to force this,
 Or this man, just to think as thou and I do;
 Impossible! unless souls were alike
 In all, which differ now like human faces.

Der. Well might the holy cause be carried on,
 If Musselmen did not make war on Musselmen.
 Why hold'st thou captive a believing monarch?
 Now, as thou hop'st to 'scape the prophet's curse,
 Release the royal Bajazet, and join,
 With force united, to destroy the Christians.

Tam. 'Tis well,—I've found the cause that mov'd thy zeal.

What shallow politician set thee on,
In hopes to fright me this way to compliance ?

Der. Our prophet only—

Tam. No,—thou dost belie him,
Thou maker of new faiths! that dar'st to build
Thy fond inventions on religion's name.
Religion's lustre is, by native innocence,
Divinely pure, and simple from all arts ;
You daub and dress her like a common mistress,
The harlot of your fancies ; and by adding
False beauties, which she wants not, make the world
Suspect her angel's face is foul beneath,
And wo' not bear all lights. Hence! I have found thee.

Der. I have but one resort. Now aid me, prophet!
(*Aside.*)

Yet have I somewhat further to unfold :
Our prophet speaks to thee in thunder—thus !

(*The Dervise draws a concealed dagger, and offers to stab Tamerlane.*)

Tam. No, villain! heav'n is watchful o'er its worshippers,—(*Wresting the dagger from him.*)—
And blasts the murderer's purpose. Think, thou wretch !

Think on the pains that wait thy crime, and tremble
When I shall doom thee—

Der. 'Tis but death at last ;
And I will suffer greatly for the cause
That urg'd me first to the bold deed.

Tam. Oh, impious ! (Crosses to R.H.)
Enthusiasm thus makes villains martyrs.

(*Pausing.*)—It shall be so :—to die! 'twere a reward.
(Crosses to centre.)

Now, learn the difference 'twixt thy faith and mine :
Thine bids thee lift thy dagger to my throat ;
Mine can forgive the wrong, and bid thee live.
Keep thy own wicked secret, and be safe :—
If thou repent'st, I have gain'd one to virtue,

And am, in that, rewarded for my mercy;
 If thou continu'st still to be the same,
 'Tis punishment enough to be a villain.
 Hence! from my sight!—It shocks my soul, to think
 That there is such a monster in my kind.

[*Devise Crosses to L.H. and exits.*

Whither will man's impiety extend?
 Oh, gracious heaven! dost thou withhold thy thunder,
 When bold assassins take thy name upon 'em,
 And swear they are the champions of thy cause?

Enter MONESES, R.H.

Mon. Oh, emperor! before whose awful throne
 Th' afflicted never kneel in vain for justice,
 (*Kneeling to Tamerlane.*)

Undone and ruin'd, blasted in my hopes,
 Here let me fall before your sacred feet,
 And groan out my misfortunes, till your pity
 (The last support and refuge that is left me)
 Shall raise me from the ground, and bid me live.

Tam. Rise, prince; nor let me reckon up thy
 worth,

And tell how boldly that might bid thee ask,
 Lest I should make a merit of my justice,
 The common debt I owe to thee, to all,
 Ev'n to the meanest of mankind; the charter
 By which I claim my crown, and heaven's protection.
 Speak, then, as to a king, the sacred name
 Where power is lodg'd, for righteous ends alone.

Mon. One only joy, one blessing, my fond heart
 Had fix'd its wishes on, and that is lost:
 That sister, for whose safety my sad soul
 Endur'd a thousand fears—

Tam. I well remember,
 When, ere the battle join'd, I saw thee first,
 With grief uncommon to a brother's love,
 Thou told'st a moving tale of her misfortunes,
 Such as bespoke my pity. Is there aught
 Thou canst demand from friendship? Ask and have it.

Mon. First, oh, let me intreat your royal goodness :
 Forgive the folly of a lover's caution,
 That forg'd a tale of folly to deceive you.
 Said I, she was my sister?—Oh, 'tis false !
 She holds a dearer interest in my soul :
 She was the mistress of my vows, my bride,
 By contract mine ; and, long ere this, the priest
 Had tied the knot for ever, had not Bajazet——

Tam. Ha ! Bajazet !—If yet his power withholds
 The cause of all thy sorrows, all thy fears,
 E'en gratitude for once shall gain upon him,
 Spite of his savage temper, to restore her.
 This morn a soldier brought a captive beauty,
 Sad though she seem'd, yet of a form more rare,
 By much the nobler spoil of all the field :
 E'en Scipio, or a victor yet more cold,
 Might have forgot his virtue at her sight.
 Struck with the pleasing wonder, I beheld her,
 Till, by a slave that waited near her person,
 I learn'd she was the captive sultan's wife :
 Strait I forbade my eyes the dangerous joy
 Of gazing long, and sent her to her lord.

Mon. There was Moneses lost. Too sure my heart
 (From the first mention of her wond'rous charms)
 Presag'd it could be only my Arpasia.

Tam. Arpasia, did'st thou say ?

Mon. Yes, my Arpasia.

Tam. Sure I mistake, or I fain would mistake thee ;
 I nam'd the queen of Bajazet ; his wife.

Mon. His queen ! his wife ! He brings that holy
 title

To varnish o'er the monstrous wrongs he has done me.

Tam. Alas ! I fear me, prince, thy griefs are just ;
 Thou art, indeed, unhappy—

Mon. Can you pity me,
 And not redress ?—Oh, royal Tamerlane !
 Thou succour of the wretched, reach thy mercy !
 Let thy justice
 Restore me my Arpasia ; give her back,
 Back to my wishes, to my transports give her !

Oh, give her to me yet, while I have life
To bless thee for the bounty.—Oh, Arpsasia!

Tam. Unhappy, royal youth! why dost thou ask
What honour must deny? Ha! is she not
His wife, whom he has wedded, whom enjoy'd?
And would'st thou have my partial friendship break
That holy knot, which tied once, all mankind
Agree to hold sacred and undissolvable?
The brutal violence would stain my justice,
And brand me with a tyrant's hated name
To late posterity. *(Crosses to L.H.)*

Mon. Then let me fly, and bear my follies with me,
Far, far from the world's sight. Honour and fame,
Arms and the glorious war shall be forgotten;
No noble sound of greatness, or ambition,
Shall wake my drowsy soul from her dead sleep,
Till the last trump do summon.

Tam. Let thy virtue
Stand up and answer to these warring passions,
That vex thy manly temper. From the moment
When first I saw thee, something wond'rous noble
Shone through thy form, and won my friendship for
thee,

Without the tedious form of long acquaintance;
Nor will I lose thee poorly for a woman.
Come, droop no more; thou shalt with me pursue
True greatness, till we rise to immortality.
Thou shalt forget these lesser cares, Moneses;
Thou shalt, and help me to reform the world.

Mon. Sacred Tamerlane,
Thy words are as the breath of angels to me.
But, oh, too deep the wounding grief is fix'd
For any hand to heal!

Tam. This dull despair
Is the soul's laziness. Rouse to the combat,
And thou art sure to conquer. War shall restore thee:
The sound of arms shall wake thy martial ardour,
And cure this amorous sickness of thy soul.
The boy, fond Love,
Is nurs'd and bred in sloth, and too much ease:

Near purling streams, in gloomy shades, he lies,
 And loosely there, instructs his votaries
 Honour and active virtue to despise ;
 But if the trumpets echo from afar,
 On silken wings sublime he cuts the air,
 Scar'd at the noise and clangor of the war.

[*Exeunt*, L.H.]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Bajazet's Tent.*

Enter HALY and the DERVISE, R.H.

Ha. To 'scape with life from an attempt like this,
 Demands my wonder justly.

Der. True, it may ;

But 'tis a principle of his new faith ;
 'Tis what his Christian favourites have inspir'd,
 Who fondly make a merit of forgiveness,
 And give their foes a second opportunity,
 If the first blow should miss. Failing to serve
 The sultan to my wish, and e'en despairing
 Of further means t' effect his liberty,
 A lucky accident retriev'd my hopes.

Ha. The prophet and our master will reward
 Thy zeal in their behalf ; but speak thy purpose.

Der. Just entering here, I met the Tartar general,
 Fierce Omar.

Ha. He commands, if I mistake not,
 This quarter of the army, and our guards ?

Der. The same. By his stern aspect, and the fires
 That kindled in his eyes, I guess'd the tumult
 Some wrong had rais'd in his tumultuous soul :
 A friendship of old date had giv'n me privilege
 To ask of his concerns. In short, I learn'd,
 That burning for the sultan's beauteous daughter,

H' had begg'd her, as a captive of the war,
 From Tamerlane; but meeting with denial
 Of what he thought his services might claim,
 Loudly he storms, and curses the Italian,
 As cause of this affront. I join'd his rage,
 And added to his injuries the wrongs
 Our prophet daily meets with from Axalla.
 But see, he comes. Improve what I shall tell,
 And all we wish is ours. (*They talk together, aside.*)

Enter OMAR, R.H.

Om. No—if I forgive it,
 Dishonour blast my name! Was it for this
 That I directed his first step to greatness,
 Taught him to climb, and made him what he is?
 Was it for this, that like a rock I stood,
 And stemm'd a torrent of our Tartar lords,
 Who scorn'd his upstart sway? When Calibes,
 In bold rebellion, drew e'en half the provinces
 To his own cause, I, like his better angel,
 Stood by his shaking throne, and fix'd it fast;
 And am I now so lost to his remembrance,
 That, when I ask a captive, he shall tell me,
 She is Axalla's right, his Christian minion.

Der. Allow me, valiant Omar, to demand,
 Since injur'd thus, why right you not yourself?
 The prize you ask is in your power.

Om. It is,
 And I will seize it, in despite of Tamerlane,
 And that Italian dog.

Ha. What need of force,
 When every thing concurs to meet your wishes?
 Our mighty master would not wish a son
 Nobler than Omar. From a father's hand
 Receive that daughter, which ungrateful Tamerlane
 Has to your worth denied.

Om. Now, by my arms,
 It will be great revenge! What would your sultan
 Give to the man that shall restore his liberty,

His crown, and give him power to wreak his hatred
Upon his greatest foe ?

Ha. All he can ask,
And far beyond his wish— (*Trumpets.*)

Om. Those trumpets speak
The emperor's approach : he comes once more
To offer terms of peace. Retire within.
I will no farther—he grows deadly to me :
And curse me, prophet, if I not repay
His hate with retribution full as mortal.

[*Exeunt, L.H.*

*Scene draws, and discovers ARPASIA lying on a
Couch.*

Arp. Oh, death ! thou gentle end of human sorrows,
Still must my weary eye-lids vainly wake,
In tedious expectation of thy peace ?
Why stand thy thousand thousand doors still open,
To take the wretched in, if stern religion
Guards every passage, and forbids my entrance ?—
Lucrece could bleed, and Porcia swallow fire,
When urg'd with griefs beyond a mortal sufferance ?
But here it must not be. Think, then, Arpasia,
Think on the sacred dictates of thy faith,
And let that arm thy virtue, to perform
What Cato's daughter durst not :—live, Arpasia,
And dare to be unhappy.

Enter TAMERLANE, R.H.

Tam. When fortune smiles upon the soldier's arms,
And adds e'en beauty to adorn his conquest,
Yet she ordains, the fair should know no fears.
Such welcome as a camp can give, fair sultaness,
We hope you have receiv'd ; it shall be larger,
And better as it may.

Arp. Since I have borne
That miserable mark of fatal greatness,
I have forgot all difference of conditions ;

Sceptres and fetters are grown equal to me,
And the best change my fate can bring is death.

Tam. Oh! teach my power
To cure those ills which you unjustly suffer,
Lest heav'n should wrest it from my idle hand,
If I look on, and see you weep in vain.

Arp. Not that my soul disdains the generous aid
Thy royal goodness proffers; but, oh, emperor!
It is not in my fate to be made happy.

Tam. Why is my pity all that I can give
To tears like yours? And yet I fear 'tis all;
Nor dare I ask what mighty loss you mourn,
Lest honour should forbid to give it back.

Arp. No, Tamerlane, nor did I mean thou
should'st,
But know (though to the weakness of my sex
I yield these tears) my soul is more than man.
Think, I am born a Greek, nor doubt my virtue;
They must be mighty evils that can vanquish
A Spartan courage, and a Christian faith.

(*They retire, L.H.*)

Enter BAJAZET, R.H.

Baj. To know no thought of rest! to have the
mind
Still ministering fresh plagues, as in a circle,
Where one dishonour treads upon another;
What know the fiends beyond it?—Ha! by hell,

(*Seeing Arpasia and Tamerlane.*)

There wanted only this to make me mad.
Comes he to triumph here? to rob me of my love,
And violate the last retreat of happiness?

Tam. But that I read upon thy frowning brow,
That war yet lives, and rages in thy breast;
Once more (in pity to the suffering world)
I meant to offer peace. (*Advances.*)

Baj. And mean'st thou too
To treat it with our empress; and to barter
The spoils which fortune gave thee, for her favours?

Seek'st thou thus our friendship ?
Is this the royal usage thou didst boast ?

Tam. The boiling passion that disturbs thy soul
Spreads clouds around, and makes thy purpose dark :
Unriddle what thy mystic fury aims at.

Baj. Is it a riddle ? Read it there explain'd ;
There, in my shame. Now judge me thou, oh, prophet !

And equal heav'n, if this demand not rage !
The peasant-hind, begot and born to slavery,
Yet dares assert a husband's sacred right,
And guards his homely couch from violation :
And shall a monarch tamely bear the wrong
Without complaining ?

Tam. If I could have wrong'd thee,
If conscious virtue, and all-judging heav'n,
Stood not between, to bar ungovern'd appetite,
What hinder'd, but, in spite of thee, my captive,
I might have us'd a victor's boundless power,
And sated every wish my soul could form ?
But, to secure thy fears, know, Bajazet,
This is among the things I dare not do.

Baj. By hell, 'tis false ! else wherefore art thou
present ?

What cam'st thou for, but to undo my honour ?
I found thee holding amorous parley with her,
Gazing and gletting on her wanton eyes,
And bargaining for pleasures yet to come :
My life, I know, is the devoted price—
But take it, I am weary of the pain.

Tam. Yet, ere thou rashly urge my rage too far,
I warn thee to take heed : I am a man,
And have the frailties common to man's nature ;
The fiery seeds of wrath are in my temper,
And may be blown up to so fierce a blaze
As wisdom cannot rule. Know, thou hast touch'd me
E'en in the nicest, tend'rest part, my honour ;
My honour, which, like pow'r, disdains being ques-
tion'd ;

Thy breath has blasted my fair virtue's fame,
And mark'd me for a villain, and a tyrant.

Arp. And stand I here an idle looker-on,

(Crosses to centre.)

To see my innocence murder'd and mangled
By barbarous hands, nor can revenge the wrong?
Art thou a man, and dar'st thou use me thus?

(To Bajazet.)

Hast thou not torn me from my native country,
From the dear arms of my lamenting friends,
From my soul's peace, and from my injur'd love?
And driv'n me to the brink of black despair?
And is it in thy malice yet to add
A wound more deep, to sully my white name,
My virtue?—

Baj. Yes, thou hast thy sex's virtues,
Their affectation, pride, ill-nature, noise,
Proneness to change, e'en from the joy that pleas'd
em;

So gracious is your idol, dear variety,
That for another love you would forego
An angel's form, to mingle with a devil's.

Arp. Why sought'st thou not from thy own im-
pious tribe

A wife like one of these?
Know, I abhor, detest the crime thou mention'st:
Not that I fear or reverence thee, thou tyrant;
But that my soul, conscious of whence it sprung,
Sits unpolled in its sacred temple,
And scorns to mingle with a thought so mean.

(Crosses to R.H. and retires up the stage.)

Tam. Oh, pity! that a greatness so divine
Should meet a fate so wretched, so unequal!
Though blind and wilful to the good that courts thee,

(To Bajazet.)

With open-handed bounty heav'n pursues thee,
And bids thee (undeserving as thou art,
And monstrous in thy crimes) be happy yet;
Whilst thou, in fury, dost avert the blessing,
And art an evil genius to thyself.

Baj. No—thou, thou art my greatest curse on
earth!

Thou, who hast robb'd me of my crown and glory,

And now pursu'st me to the verge of life,
 To spoil me of my honour: thou, thou hypocrite!
 That wear'st a pageant outside shew of virtue,
 To cover the hot thoughts that glow within!
 Thou rank adulterer!

Tam. Oh, that thou wert
 The lord of all those thousands that lie breathless
 On yonder field of blood, that I again
 Might hunt the face of death and danger,
 Through the tumultuous battle, and there force thee,
 Vanquish'd and sinking underneath my arm,
 To own thou hast traduc'd me like a villain.

Baj. Ha! does it gall thee, Tartar? By revenge
 It joys me much to find thou feel'st my fury.
 Yes, I will echo to thee, thou adulterer!
 Thou dost profane the name of king and soldier,
 And, like a ruffian bravo, cam'st with force
 To violate the holy marriage bed.

Tam. Wert thou not shelter'd by thy abject state,
 The captive of my sword, by my just anger,
 My breath, like thunder, should confound thy pride,
 And doom thee dead this instant with a word.

Baj. 'Tis false! my fate's above thee, and thou
 dar'st not.

Tam. Ha! dare not! Thou hast rais'd my pond'-
 rous rage,
 And now it falls to crush thee at a blow.
 A guard there!—Seize, and drag him to his fate!

Enter GUARDS, R.H. they seize Bajazet.

Tyrant, I'll do a double justice on thee,
 At once revenge myself, and all mankind.

Baj. Well dost thou, ere thy violence and lust
 (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Invade my bed, thus to begin with murder:
 Drown all thy fears in blood, and sin securely.

Tam. Away!

Arp. (*Advances and kneels.*) Oh, stay! I charge
 thee, by renown;

By that bright glory thy great soul pursues,
Call back the doom of death !

Tam. Fair injur'd excellence, *(Raises her.)*

Why dost thou kneel, and waste such precious pray'rs
For one to goodness lost, who first undid thee,
Who still pursues, and aggravates the wrong ?

Baj. By Alha ! no—I will not wear a life
Bought with such vile dishonour.—Death shall free
me

At once from infamy, and thee, thou traitress !

Arp. No matter, though the whistling winds grow
loud,

And the rude tempest roars, 'tis idle rage :
Oh ! mark it not ; but let thy steady virtue
Be constant to its temper. Save his life,
And save Arpasia from the sport of talkers.
Think how the busy, meddling world, will toss
Thy mighty name about, in scurril mirth ;
Shall brand thy vengeance, as a foul design,
And make such monstrous legends of our lives,
As leg'd posterity shall blush in reading.

Tam. Oh, matchless virtue ! Yes, I will obey ;
Though laggard in the race, admiring yet,
I will pursue the shining path thou tread'st.
Sultan, be safe ! Reason resumes her empire,

(The Guards release Bajazet.)

And I am cool again.—Here break we off,
Lest farther speech should minister new rage.

Wisely from dangerous passions I retreat,
To keep a conquest which was hard to get :
And, oh ! 'tis time I should for flight prepare,
A war more fatal seems to threaten there,
And all my rebel blood assists the fair :

One moment more, and I too late shall find,
That love's the strongest pow'r that lords it o'er the
mind. *[Exit, R.H. followed by the Guards.]*

Baj. To what new shame, what plague am I re-
serv'd ? *(Crosses to L.H.)*

Why hast thou forc'd this nauseous life upon me ?
Is it to triumph o'er me ?—But I will,

I will be free ; I will forget thee all ;
 Death shall expunge at once, and ease my soul.
 Prophet, take notice, I disclaim thy paradise,
 Thy fragrant bow'rs, and everlasting shades ;
 Thou hast plac'd woman there, and all thy joys are
 tainted. [Crosses and exit, R.H.]

Arp. A little longer yet, be strong, my heart ;
 A little longer let the busy spirits
 Keep on their cheerful round.
 And see, the poor Moneses comes, to take
 One sad adieu, and then we part for ever.

Enter MONESSES, L.H.

Mon. Already am I onward on my way ;
 Thy tuneful voice comes like a hollow sound
 At distance, to my ears. My eyes grow heavy,
 And all the glorious lights of heav'n look dim ;
 'Tis the last office they shall ever do me,
 To view thee once, and then to close and die.

Arp. Alas, how happy have we been, Moneses !
 Ye gentle days, that once were ours, what joys
 Did every cheerful morning bring along !
 No fears, no jealousies, no angry parents,
 That for unequal births, or fortunes, frown'd ;
 But love, that kindly join'd our hearts, to bless us,
 Made us a blessing too to all besides.

Mon. Oh, cast not thy remembrance back, Arpa-
 sia !

'Tis grief unutterable ; 'tis distraction !
 But let this last of hours be peaceful sorrow !
 Here let me kneel, and pay my latest vows. (*Kneels.*)
 Be witness, all ye saints, thou heav'n and nature,
 Be witness of my truth, for you have known it !
 Be witness that I never knew a pleasure,
 In all the world could offer, like Arpasia !
 Be witness, that I liv'd but in Arpasia !
 And, oh, be witness, that her loss has kill'd me.

(*Rises.*)

Arp. Oh, my Moneses,

While thou art speaking, life begins to fail,
 And ev'ry tender accent chills like death.
 The last dear object of my parting soul
 Will be Moneses ; the last breath that lingers
 Within my panting breast, shall sigh, Moneses.

Mon. It is enough ! Now to thy rest, my soul,
 The world and thou have made an end at once.

Arp. Fain wou'd I still detain thee, hold thee still :
 Nor honour can forbid, that we together
 Should share the poor few minutes that remain :

I swear, methinks this sad society
 Has something pleasing in it,—Death's dark shades
 Seem, as we journey on, to lose their horror ;
 At near approach the monsters, form'd by fear,
 Are vanish'd all, and leave the prospect clear :
 Amidst the gloomy vale, a pleasing scene,
 With flow'rs adorn'd, and never-fading green,
 Inviting stands, to take the wretched in :
 No wars, no wrongs, no tyrants, no despair,
 Disturb the quiet of a place so fair,
 But injur'd lovers find Elysium there. [*Exeunt, R.H.*]

Enter BAJAZET, OMAR, HALY, and the DERVISE,
 L.H.

Baj. Now, by the glorious tomb that shrines our
 prophet,
 By Mecca's sacred temple, here I swear,
 Our daughter is thy bride ! and to that gift
 Such wealth, such power, such honours will I add,
 That monarchs shall with envy view thy state,
 And own thou art a demi-god to them.
 Thou hast given me what I wish'd,—power of re-
 venge ;
 And when a king rewards, 'tis ample retribution.

Om. Twelve Tartar lords, each potent in his tribe,
 Have sworn to own my cause, and draw their thou-
 sands,
 To-morrow, from th' ungrateful Parthian's side.
 The day declining seems to yield to night,

Ere little more than half her course be ended,
 In an auspicious hour, prepare for flight:
 The leaders of the troops through which we pass,
 Rais'd by my power, devoted to my service,
 Shall make our passage secret and secure.

Der. Already, mighty sultan, art thou safe,
 Since, by yon passing torches' light, I guess,
 To his pavilion Tamerlane retires,
 Attended by a train of waiting courtiers.
 All who remain within these tents are thine,
 And hail thee as their lord.—

Ha! the Italian prince,
 With sad Moneses, are not yet gone forth.

Baj. Ha! with our queen and daughter!

Om. They are ours:

I mark'd the slaves who waited on Axalla;
 They, when the emperor pass'd out, press'd on,
 And mingled with the crowd, nor miss'd their lord:
 He is your pris'ner, sir: I go this moment,
 To seize, and bring him to receive his doom.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

Baj. Haste, Haly! follow, and secure the Greek;
 Him, too, I wish to keep within my power.

[*Exit Haly, R.H.*]

Der. (L.H.) If my dread lord permit his slave to
 speak,

I would advise to spare Axalla's life,
 Till we are safe beyond the Parthian's power:
 Him, as our pledge of safety, may we hold;
 And, could you gain him to assist your flight,
 It might import you much.

Baj. Thou counsell'st well;
 And though I hate him, (for he is a Christian,
 And to my mortal enemy devoted)
 Yet, to secure my liberty and vengeance,
 I wish he now were ours.

Der. And see, they come!
 Fortune repents; again she courts your side;
 And, with this first fair offering of success,
 She woos you to forget her crime of yesterday.

Enter OMAR, with AXALLA, prisoner, SELIMA following, weeping, R.H.

Ax. (*Crosses to centre.*) I wo' not call thee villain,
'tis a name

Too holy for thy crime. To break thy faith,
And turn a rebel to so good a master,
Is an ingratitude unmatch'd on earth.
The first revolting angel's pride could only
Do more than thou hast done. Thou copiest well,
And keep'st the black original in view.

Om. Do rage, and vainly call upon thy master
To save his minion. My revenge has caught thee,
And I will make thee curse that fond presumption
That set thee on to rival me in aught.

Baj. Christian, I hold thy fate at my disposal!
One only way remains to mercy open:
Be partner of my flight and my revenge,
And thou art safe. The other choice is death.

Ax. Then briefly thus: death is the choice I make;
Since, next to heaven, my master and my friend
Has interest in my life, and still shall claim it.

Baj. Then take thy wish.—Call in our mutes!

Sel. (*Crosses to L.H. and kneels.*) My father!
If yet you have not sworn to cast me off,
And turn me out to wander in misfortune;
If yet my voice be gracious in your ears,
If yet my duty and my love offend not;
Oh, call your sentence back, and save Axalla.

Baj. Rise, Selima!—(*Raises her.*)—The slave de-
serves to die,

Who durst, with sullen pride, refuse my mercy;
Yet, for thy sake, once more I offer life.

Sel. Some angel whisper to my anxious soul,
What I shall do to save him!— (*Crosses to centre.*)
Oh, my Axalla! seem but to consent—

(*Apart to Axalla.*)

Unkind and cruel! will you then do nothing?
I find I am not worth thy least of cares.

Ax. Oh, labour not to hang dishonour on me!

I could bear sickness, pain, and poverty,
 Those mortal evils, worse than death, for thee :
 But this—it has the force of fate against us,
 And cannot be.

Sel. See, see, sir, he relents : (To Bajazet.)
 Already he inclines to own your cause.
 A little longer, and he is all yours.

Baj. Then mark, how far a father's fondness yields :
 Till midnight I defer the death he merits,
 And give him up, till then, to thy persuasion.
 If by that time he meets my will, he lives ;
 If not, thyself shall own he dies with justice.

Ax. 'Tis but to lengthen life upon the rack.
 I am resolv'd already.

Sel. Oh, be still !
 Nor rashly urge a ruin on us both :
 'Tis but a moment more I have to save thee.
 Be kind, auspicious Alha, to my prayer ;
 More for my love, than for myself, I fear ;
 Neglect mankind awhile, and make him all thy care. }

[*Exeunt Axalla and Selima, L.H.*]

Baj. Moneses—is that dog secur'd ?

Om. He is.

Baj. 'Tis well.—My soul perceives returning greatness,

As nature feels the spring. Lightly she bounds,
 And shakes dishonour, like a burthen, from her ;
 Once more imperial, awful, and herself.

[*Exeunt, R.H.*]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Bajazet's Tent.*

Enter ARPASIA, L.H.

Arp. Sure, 'tis a horror more than darkness brings,
 That sits upon the night ! Fate is abroad ;

Some ruling fiend hangs in the dusky air,
 And scatters ruin, death, and wild distraction,
 O'er all the wretched race of man below.
 Not long ago, a troop of ghastly slaves
 Rush'd in, and forc'd Moneses from my sight:
 Death hung so heavy on his drooping spirits,
 That scarcely could he say,—Farewell—for ever!
 And yet, methinks, some gentle spirit whispers,—
 Thy peace draws near, Arpasia; sigh no more!
 And see! the king of terrors is at hand;
 His minister appears. *(Retires up the stage.)*

Enter BAJAZET and HALY, L.H.

Baj. (Aside to Haly.) The rest I leave
 To thy dispatch: for, oh, my faithful Haly!
 Another care has taken up thy master.
 Spite of the high-wrought tempest in my soul,
 Spite of the pangs which jealousy has cost me,
 This haughty woman reigns within my breast.

Ha. Why wears my lord
 An anxious thought for what his power commands?
 When, in an happy hour, you shall, ere long,
 Have borne the empress from amidst your foes,
 She must be yours, be only, and all yours.

Baj. On that depends my fear. Yes, I must have
 her:
 I own, I will not, cannot go without her.

[Exit Haly, L.H.]

When last we parted, 'twas on angry terms;
 Let the remembrance die, or kindly think
 That jealous rage is but a hasty flame,
 That blazes out, when love too fiercely burns.

Arp. (Advances.) For thee to wrong me, and for
 me to suffer,
 Is the hard lesson that my soul has learnt,
 Nor is it worth my leisure to distinguish
 If love or jealousy commit the violence:
 Each have alike been fatal to my peace,
 Confirming me a wretch, and thee a tyrant.

Baj. Still to deform thy gentle brow with frowns,
 And still to be perverse, it is a manner
 Abhorrent from the softness of thy sex :
 Women, like summer storms, awhile are cloudy,
 Burst out in thunder, and impetuous showers ;
 But straight the sun of beauty dawns abroad,
 And all the fair horizon is serene.

Arp. Then, to retrieve the honour of my sex.
 Here I disclaim that changing and inconstancy :
 To thee I will be ever as I am.

Baj. Thou say'st I am a tyrant ; think so still,
 And let it warn thy prudence to lay hold
 On the good hour of peace, that courts thee now.
 Souls form'd like mine brook being scorn'd but ill.
 Be well advis'd, and profit by my patience ;
 It is a short-liv'd virtue.

Arp. Turn thy eyes
 Back on the story of my woes, barbarian !
 Thou that hast violated all respects
 Due to my sex and honour of my birth !
 Thou brutal ravisher, can I have peace with thee ?
 Impossible ! First heaven and hell shall join ;
 They only differ more.

Baj. I see, 'tis vain
 To court thy stubborn temper with endearments.
 Resolve this moment to return my love,
 And be the willing partner of my flight,
 Or, by the prophet's holy law, thou diest.

Arp. And dost thou hope to fright me with the
 phantom
 Death ? 'tis the greatest mercy thou canst give.
 Know, I disdain to aid thy treach'rous purpose :
 And, should'st thou dare to forcè me, with my cries
 I will call heaven and earth to my assistance.

Baj. Confusion ! dost thou brave me ? But my
 wrath
 Shall find a passage to thy swelling heart,
 And rack thee worse than all the pains of death.
 That Grecian dog, the minion of thy wishes,
 Shall be dragg'd forth, and butcher'd in thy sight.

Thou shalt behold him when his pangs are terrible,
Till thou shalt rend thy hair, tear out thy eyes,
And curse thy pride, while I applaud my vengeance.

Arp. Oh, fatal image! all my powers give way,
And resolution sickens at the thought;
Come, all ye great examples of my sex,
Chaste virgins, tender wives, and pious matrons;
Come to my aid, and teach me to defy
The malice of this fiend! I feel, I feel
Your sacred spirit arm me to resistance!
Yes, tyrant, I will stand this shock of fate;
Will live to triumph o'er thee, for a moment,
Then die well pleas'd, and follow my Moneses.

Baj. Thou talk'st it well. But talking is thy privilege;

'Tis all the boasted courage of thy sex;
Though, for thy soul, thou dar'st not meet the danger.

Arp. By all my hopes of happiness, I dare!

Baj. This moment is the trial.

Arp. Let it come!

This moment, then, shall show I am a Greek,
And speak my country's courage in my suff'ring.

Baj. Here, Mercy, I disclaim thee!—Mark me,
traitress!

My love prepares a victim to thy pride,
And when it greets thee next, 'twill be in blood.

[*Exit, L. H.*]

Arp. My heart beats higher, and my nimble spirits
Ride swiftly through their purple channels round.

'Tis the last blaze of life. Nature revives,
Like a dim winking lamp, that flashes brightly
With parting light, and straight is dark for ever.

And see, my last of sorrows is at hand;
Death and Moneses come together to me;
As if my stars, that had so long been cruel,
Grew kind at last, and gave me all I wish.

Mon. (Without.) I charge ye, O ye ministers of
fate!

Be swift to execute your master's will;

Bear me to my Arpasia ; let me tell her,
The tyrant has grown kind :—

Enter MONESSES, guarded by some Mutes; others attending with a cup of poison and a bow-string, L.H.

He bids me go,
And die beneath her feet.

Arp. If it be happiness, alas! to die,
To lie forgotten in the silent grave,
To love and glory lost, and from among
The great Creator's works expung'd and blotted ;
Then, very shortly, shall we both be happy.

Mon. There is no room for doubt ; 'tis certain bliss.
The tyrant's cruel violence, thy loss,
Already seem more light ; nor has my soul
One unrepented guilt upon remembrance,
To make me dread the justice of hereafter :
But, standing now on the last verge of life,
Boldly I view the vast abyss, eternity,
Eager to plunge, and leave my woes behind me.

Arp. By all the truth of our past loves, I vow,
To die appears a very nothing to me.
This very now I could put off my being
Without a groan ; but, to behold thee die !—
Nature shrinks in me at the dreadful thought,
Nor can my constancy sustain this blow.

Mon. Since thou art arm'd for all things after death,
Why should the pomp and preparation of it
Be frightful to thy eyes ? There's not a pain,
Which age or sickness brings, the least disorder
That vexes any part of this fine frame,
But's full as grievous. All that the mind feels
Is much, much more :—and see, I go to prove it.

*Enter a Mute, L.H.—He signs to the rest, who prof-
fer a bow-string to Monesses; he then exits, L.H.*

Arp. Think, ere we part—

Mon. Of what ?

Arp. Of something soft,
Tender and kind ; of something wond'rous sad.
Oh, my full soul !

Mon. My tongue is at a loss ;
Thoughts crowd so fast, thy name is all I've left ;
My kindest, truest, dearest, best Arpasia !

(The Mutes struggle with him.)

Arp. I have a thousand thousand things to utter,
A thousand more to hear yet. Barbarous villains !
Give me a minute. Speak to me, Moneses !

Mon. Speak to thee !—'tis the business of my life,
'Tis all the use I have for vital air.
Stand off, ye slaves !—To tell thee that my heart
Is full of thee ; that even, at this dread moment,
My fond eyes gaze with joy and rapture on thee ;
Angels, and light itself, are not so fair——

Enter BAJAZET, HALY, and Attendants, L.H.

Baj. Ha ! wherefore lives this dog ? Be quick, ye
slaves !
And rid me of the pain.

Mon. For only death,
And the last night, can shut out my Arpasia.

(The Mutes strangle Moneses, and bear him off, L.H.)

Arp. Oh, dismal !—'tis not to be borne !—Ye mo-
ralists !

Ye talkers ! what are all your precepts now ?
Patience ! distraction !—Blast the tyrant ! blast him,
Avenging lightnings ! snatch him hence, ye fiends !
Love ! Death ! Moneses ! *(She sinks down—dies.)*

Baj. *(Kneels down by the body.)* Fly, ye slaves,
And fetch me cordials. No, she shall not die !
Spite of her sullen pride, I'll hold in life,
And force her to be blest against her will.

Ha. Already 'tis beyond the power of art ;
For see, a deadly cold has froze the blood,
The pliant limbs grow stiff, and lose their use,
And all the animating fire is quench'd.

Baj. Can it be possible!—(*Rises.*)—Can rage and grief,

Can love and indignation be so fierce,
So mortal in a woman's heart? Confusion!
Is she escap'd then? What is royalty,
If those that are my slaves, and should live for me,
Can die, and bid defiance to my power?

[*Exeunt, L.H.*]

Re-enter BAJAZET, L.H. and the DERVISE, R.H.

Der. The valiant Omar sends to tell thy greatness
The hour of flight is come, and urges haste;
Since he descries, near Tamerlane's pavilion,
Bright troops of crowding torches, who from thence,
On either hand, stretch far into the night,
And seem to form a shining front of battle.
Behold, e'en from this place thou may'st discern them.

(*Looking out, R.H.*)

Baj. By Alha, yes! they cast a day around 'em,
And the plain seems thick set with stars, as heaven.
Ha! or my eyes are false, they move this way;
'Tis certain so. Fly, Haly, to our daughter.

[*Exit Haly, L.H.*]

Let some secure the Christian prince, Axalla:
We will begone this minute.

Enter OMAR, R.H.

Om. Lost! undone!

Baj. What mean'st thou?

Om. All our hopes of flight are lost.
Mirvan and Zama, with the Parthian horse,
Enclose us round; they hold us in a toil.

Baj. Ha! whence this unexpected curse of chance?

Om. Too late I learnt that, early in the night,
A slave was suffer'd, by your daughter's order,
To pass the guard. I clove the villain down,
Who yielded to his flight; but that's poor vengeance.
That fugitive has rais'd the camp upon us,

And, unperceiv'd, by favour of the night,
In silence they have march'd to intercept us.

Baj. My daughter! Oh, the traitress!

Der. Yet, we have

Axalla in our power; and angry Tamerlane
Will buy his fav'rite's life on any terms.

Om. With these few friends I have, I for awhile
Can face their force: if they refuse us peace,
Revenge shall sweeten ruin. [*Exit, R.H.*]

Enter HALY, with SELIMA, weeping, L.H.

Baj. See, where she comes, with well-dissembled
innocence;
With truth and faith so lovely in her face,
As if she durst e'en disavow the falsehood.

(*Crosses to L.H.*)

Hop'st thou to make amends with trifling tears,
For my lost crown, and disappointed vengeance?
Ungrateful Selima, thy father's curse!
Bring forth the minion of her foolish heart;
He dies this moment.

Ha. Would I could not speak
The crime of fatal love! The slave who fled,
By whom we are undone, was that Axalla.

Baj. Ha! say'st thou?—

Ha. Hid beneath that vile appearance,
The princess found a means for his escape.

Sel. I am undone! e'en nature has disclaimed me!
My father! have I lost you all?—My father!

Baj. Talk'st thou of nature, who hast broke her
bands?

Thou art my bane, thou witch, thou infant parricide!
But I will study to be strangely cruel;
I will forget the folly of my fondness;
Drive all the father from my breast; now snatch thee,
Tear thee to pieces, drink thy treacherous blood,
And make thee answer all my great revenge!
Now, now, thou traitress! (*Offers to kill her.*)

Sel. Plunge the poniard deep! (*She embraces him.*)

The life my father gave shall hear his summons,
 And issue at the wound—
 Since from your spring I drew the purple stream,
 And I must pay it back, if you demand it.

Baj. Hence from my thoughts, thou soft relenting
 weakness!—

Hast thou not giv'n me up a prey? betrayed me?

Sel. Oh, not for worlds! not e'en for all the joys
 Love, or the prophet's paradise can give!
 Amidst the thousand pains of anxious tenderness,
 I made the gentle, kind Axalla, swear,
 Your life, your crown, and honour should be safe.

Baj. Away! my soul disdains the vile dependence!
 No, let me rather die, die like a king!
 Shall I fall down at the proud Tartar's foot,
 And say, have mercy on me?—(*Shout.*)—Hark! they
 come!

Disgrace will overtake my ling'ring hand;
 Die, then! thy father's shame and thine die with
 thee! (*Offers to kill her.*)

Sel. For heaven, for pity's sake!

Baj. No more, thou trifler!

(*She catches hold of his arm.*)

Ha! dar'st thou bar my will?—tear off her hold!

Sel. What, not for life! should I not plead for life!
 Look on my eyes, which you've so often kiss'd,
 And swore they were your best-lov'd queen's, my mo-
 ther's;

Behold 'em now, streaming for mercy, mercy!

Look on me, and deny me, if you can!

'Tis but for life I beg; is that a boon

So hard for me t' obtain, or you to grant?

Oh, spare me! spare your Selima, my father!

Baj. A lazy sloth hangs on my resolution:

It is my Selima!—Ha!—What, my child!

And can I murder her?

(*Shouts.*)

Again they come! I leave her to my foes!

And shall they triumph o'er the race of Bajazet!

Die, Selima!—Is that a father's voice?

Rouse, rouse, my fury! Yes, she dies the victim

To my lost hopes. Out, out, thou foolish nature!
Justly she shares the ruin she has made.

*(Dashes the dagger to the ground, and crosses to
R.H.)*

Enter Mutes, L.H.

Seize her, ye slaves, and strangle her this moment!

(To the Mutes.)

Sel. Oh, let me die by you! Behold my breast!

I wo' not shrink! Oh, save me but from these!

Baj. Dispatch! *(The Mutes seize her.)*

Sel. But for a moment, while I pray

That heaven may guard my father!

Baj. Dogs!

Sel. That you may only bless me ere I die. *(Shout.)*

Baj. Ye tedious villains, then the work is mine!

As Bajazet runs at Selima with his sword, enter TAMERLANE, AXALLA, &c. R.H. Axalla gets between Bajazet and Selima, whilst Tamerlane and the rest drive Bajazet and the Mutes off the stage, R.H.

Ax. And am I come to save thee? Oh, my joy!
This one success is more than all my wars,
The noblest, dearest glory of my sword.

Sel. Alas, Axalla! death has been around me;
My coward soul still trembles at the fright,
And seems but half secure, e'en in thy arms.

Ax. Retire, my fair, and let me guard thee forth:
Blood and tumultuous slaughter are about us;
Nor will the pleasure of my heart be full,
Till all my fears are ended in thy safety.

[Exeunt, L.H.]

Enter TAMERLANE, the PRINCE of TANAIIS, ZAMA, MIRVAN, and SOLDIERS, with BAJAZET, OMAR, and the DERVISE, prisoners, R.H.

Tam. Mercy, at length, gives up her peaceful
sceptre,

And Justice sternly takes her turn to govern :
 'Tis a rank world, and asks her keenest sword,
 To cut up villany of monstrous growth.—
 Zama, take care that, with the earliest dawn,
 Those traitors meet the fate their treason merits.

(*Pointing to Omar and the Dervise; they are taken out, L. H.*)

For thee, thou tyrant!—(*To Bajazet.*)—whose oppressive violence

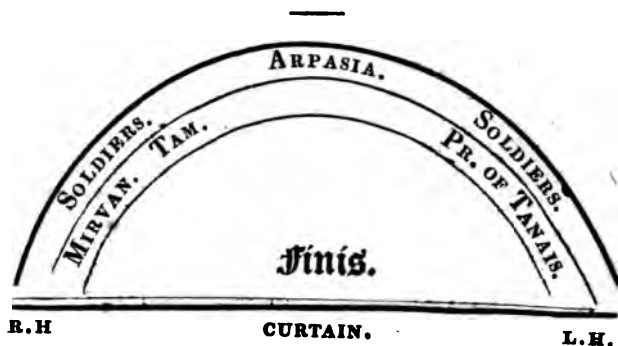
Has ruin'd those thou should'st protect at home,—
 What punishment is equal to thy crimes ?
 The doom thy rage design'd for me, be thine :
 Clos'd in a cage, like some destructive beast,
 I'll have thee borne about, in public view,
 A great example of that righteous vengeance
 That waits on cruelty and pride like thine.

Baj. (L. H.) It is beneath me to decline my fate ;
 I stand prepar'd to meet thy utmost hate :
 Yet think not I will long thy triumph see :
 None want the means, when the soul dares be free.
 I'll curse thee with my last, my parting breath,
 And keep the courage of my life in death ;
 Then boldly venture on that world unknown,—
 It cannot use me worse than this has done.

[*Exit Bajazet, guarded, L. H.*]

Tam. Behold the vain effects of earth-born pride,
 That scorn'd heaven's laws, and all its power defied ;
 That could the hand which form'd it first forget,
 And fondly say,—I made myself be great !
 But justly those above assert their sway,
 And teach e'en kings what homage they should pay, }
 Who then rule best, when mindful to obey.

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.



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